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THE EFFECT OF URBANIZATION ON WORK & LEISURE*

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(Received on 28th May, 1956)

IN a letter dated 5th December, 1955, UNESCO invited The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture 'to make studies of the present state of the traditional arts and traditional uses of Indian literature in the community life of villages near Calcutta, etc.' In compliance with this request, necessary field investigation was carried out and a seminar in two sessions was also held on the 26th and 27th of May, 1956. The first session, under the chairmanship of the present writer, was devoted to a study of changes in traditional arts ; while the second, under the chairmanship of Professor Srikumar Banerjee, was in connection with traditional literature.

We are presenting here, through the kind permission of The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, a summary of the results of enquiry in the two areas chosen for investigation, as well as the basic data gathered in the field.

When one tries to find out the root cause of the observed changes, one is confronted by facts which are partly economic or material, and others which partly lie in the region of the

*Presidential address in the meeting held on the 26th of May, 1956, at The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta,

mind. Thus, for example, the ancient art of house-building is undergoing change in the neighbourhood of Calcutta partly because it is now cheaper in the long run to build in brick and tiles, and partly because the skills associated with the ancient type of houses are becoming progressively rarer.

In the field of leisure and entertainment, we observe similarly that if the residents of a village live mainly by agriculture, their work and leisure are more or less seasonally distributed. Some months are work months, while, when the harvest is over, people in large numbers find it possible to visit fairs or to spend money on entertainments of various kinds. But when industrial establishments spring up in the neighbourhood of a village, land is no longer available for farming and the villagers find a new means of earning in the factories or offices. Then work and leisure are no longer seasonally distributed, but different classes of workers have their work and leisure spread out in different ways all through the year. The neighbourhood of the city and the use of the gramophone, radio or the cinema offer a wider choice to the erstwhile villagers in the manner in which they can spend their leisure. In short, leisure becomes more personalized, while the range of choice in the matter of entertainment also becomes wider.

A careful comparison made between a village far from Calcutta with a small town in the neighbourhood of the city shows this contrast in a fairly clear manner. But what is still more interesting is that, even in the distant peasants' village, there is considerable competition between the old and new types of entertainment. The *yatra*, or stageless theatre of the old type run by professional companies, and the songs sung in accompaniment with coloured, hand-painted rolls of picture prepared by a hereditary caste of bards, are giving place to amateur theatrical clubs. This is particularly conspicuous since the Era of Independence began in 1947. Villagers seem to have become imbued with a new ideal of social fellowship; and amateur theatrical clubs or libraries punctuate their normal activities with social services of various kinds. This growth of social consciousness, as well as a new kind of interest in religion, which is evident in one of the reports presented, is an

important characteristic of modern times. It would be premature to generalize on the basis of the small amount of data presented here ; but it would perhaps not be wrong to say that with an increasing urbanization of rural India, we are perhaps on the threshold of an age in which we are seeking to strike new roots into the culture of ancient times so that we shall be furnished with strength to face the problems and responsibilities of the present.

This is perhaps the meaning of the fact that when people take upon themselves the responsibility of offering entertainment through theatres to their neighbours, they no longer depend on the traditional castes, but do it themselves ; while even the dramas of old are recast more in accordance with the new spirit of the age, which is the spirit of humanism. The villagers seek to urbanize themselves, while interests become more secular and less religious, in the old sense of the term. One may perhaps venture to suggest that urbanization is a material and economic phenomenon consequent upon changes in our system of production ; while the new growth of social consciousness has been one of the results of India's contact with the West.

In the course of one of the studies presented in the symposium, it was noticeable that there is hardly any sense of regret at what has gone by. There is a natural complaint against 'revivalism', against a kind of adaptation of old arts to present purposes when lacking in taste or discrimination. Professor Nihar-ranjan Ray very rightly said that, if there is going to be an artistic revival of ancient crafts, it should not come from a mechanical effort made to that end, for it is likely to be short-lived because untrue ; such a revival can only come as a creative endeavour born out of an artist's inward inspiration.

I

The village of Amdabad is situated 84 miles away from Calcutta. It is 42 miles from the nearest railway station, 25 miles from Tamluk, the nearest town, and 6 miles from the nearest bus route. The population is 4,500. There are no industries in the village except such small domestic ones as basket-weaving

or the weaving of mats from palm leaves. The people are dependent upon agriculture, rent or money-lending.

The chief castes are the following ; Brāhmaṇa, Vaiṣṇava, Māhiṣya, Pauṇḍra Kṣatriya, Tānti (weaver), Kumhāra (potter), Teli (oil-presser), Karaṅga (carpenter), Citrakāra or Paṭidāra (painter), Dule (palanquin-bearer), and Mohammedans. Brahmins and mendicant Vaishnavas do not till the land, the rest do so either personally or through employees.

There are two high schools and one primary school in the village. Of other institutions, there are altogether 9 clubs and libraries with a total membership of 1,441. Many members belong to several institutions simultaneously ; therefore this figure is inflated, the actual number of members being smaller. The oldest institution was started eleven years ago. Most of the remaining ones were started within the last six or seven years. Of the two high schools, one was started three years ago and the other seven years earlier.

The traditional culture of the locality is handed down through the medium of songs and dramas of the indigenous type called y a t r a. During the latter part of the rainy season, Brahmins are employed by well-to-do Mahishya farmers for the ritual reading of some of the popular epic poems, such as, the B h a g a v a t a. But this is limited to no more than four or five prosperous families in Amdabad. The Brahmins are paid in kind ; uncooked rice and vegetables being presented to them at the end of a month's reading.

Another ancient method of entertainment and instruction consists of the pictures and songs exhibited and recited by the Patidara caste, who go with their scrolls from house to house. It will be seen from the field report, that these minstrels are paid very poorly and can hardly earn enough for sustenance by means of their toil. Another occupation of this caste is the making of images for worship. Quite a few people from the Mahishya caste have recently taken to the same supplementary occupation ; while with the potters, image-making is an established traditional trade. Consequently, some of the Patidara minstrels in the neighbouring village of Nankarchak have taken to small trading.

The songs sung by the Patidaras have been handed down to them from ancient times. A few of the singers, able to compose, add to the verses from the Bengali *Ramāyana* and *Mahābhārata* or Kṛttivāsa and Kāśirām Dās.

It is curious that these minstrels have Hindu personal names, while their marriage and funeral ceremonies take place according to Mohammedan rules. In Hindu society, they are looked upon as a degraded caste. Some of them have recently begun to take Muslim names and Muslim titles like *Seikh*. Yet they retain their caste endogamy and also do not eat beef, in contrast to other Mohammedans.

The Vaishnavas are a religious sect, many of whom earn their living by means of mendicancy. The songs which they sing from door to door are about Radha and Krishna. These songs are popular, and the Vaishnava succeeds in earning his livelihood by this means.

The heroic tales of olden times, or stories carrying a religious or moral lesson, and also providing a certain amount of entertainment, are thus handed down from one generation to another by the three castes or sects mentioned above.

The total number of families of Brahmin, Vaishnava and Patidara caste who still carry on their traditional occupation, is as follows: Brahmin, 10 (48 individuals), Vaishnava, 3 (23 individuals) and Patidara, 11 (43 individuals). Among the Vaishnavas there are 55 other families (150 individuals) who have taken to agriculture.

All the castes that maintain the traditional culture through songs or the exhibition of painted scrolls, the reading of sacred scriptures, or the performance of religious rites, are economically at a very low level. It is interesting to observe that these professional people serve the general population, although the latter play hardly any active part. It is only during *Namākirṭana*, or musical recital of the name of God, that the audience also joins the Vaishnava singer in communal recitation.

The demand for schooling among all castes, including the suppressed Dule, or palanquin-bearer-cum-agricultural-labourer caste, springs basically from a desire to be raised in social

status. This is a post-Independence phenomenon; and it is curious that the competition between villages, or between factions of the same village, has been followed in the country around by a corresponding increase in the number of clubs and libraries on a non-caste basis. The members of these new institutions do not any longer depend upon professionals for their entertainment. They have begun to develop theatres of the urban type and also indigenous *yatra*s of the rural type. As the villagers develop these institutions, they depend more and more on dramas published in Calcutta, particularly those published by the booksellers of Bartala and Garanhata. It is this increasing participation of the villagers in their own entertainment that has led to the progressive decay of the professional castes connected with entertainment.

Amdabad, being far from easy of approach, still retains the old traditional types of entertainment and instruction, but along with the latter stand the newly-introduced urbanized forms. And we notice that the urban patterns are progressively becoming dominant. This observation is also borne out by two more facts: the earthen toys which women of the Patidara caste used to make formerly for sale in fairs, are decreasing in popularity, while their place is being taken by celluloid or plastic dolls introduced by small traders even in the most distant villages of Bengal. Moreover, cinema shows are becoming so popular that many hundreds of people gather on foot or in bullock carts from distances of even ten or fifteen miles whenever a travelling company sets up a show in a tent. The films are the same as those exhibited in towns — more social than religious; and such secular plays seem to be developing a deeper and wider appeal among the rural population than the purely religious stories presented by either the Brahmin or the Patidara caste. This is an indication of the urbanization of taste, coupled with a progressive decay of the traditional pattern.

II

The municipal town of Panihati is situated at a distance of ten miles from Calcutta, with which it is connected by rail and road. It developed from an ancient village and was the centre

of Shakta and Vaishnava worship. Nityananda, the celebrated preacher of Vaishnavism, made Panihati his headquarters in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The population of the town has increased very largely during the last twenty years. From roughly 11,000 between 1901 and 1931, it became 27,400 in 1941 and 49,600 in 1951. This increase has been due mainly to the establishment of modern industries : one chemical, two textile, and several other modern factories, including engineering works, which now exist within the limits of the municipality. There is no cultivable land in Panihati itself. Vacant spaces have recently been occupied by four colonies of displaced persons from East Pakistan. Apart from these persons, the population of the town consists principally of Brahmins and Kayasthas. A minority is formed by washermen, weavers, barbers, oil-pressers, potters, fishermen, bell-metal and brass workers and the banking castes.

A hundred families were interviewed in the month of February, 1956. From an examination of the chart which is presented in the report on field work, it will be seen that all these families are no longer dependent on agriculture. Some carry on small trade, some are engaged in the medical or teaching profession, while the rest are employed in the factories near by.

The town has two clubs, one established in 1914 and the other in 1950. One club has a library of 2,500 books, while another library, established in 1898, has 10,407 books. There is a health centre, a labour welfare centre, sponsored by the Government, and a very popular cinema. A sports club established in 1898, and having arrangements for games and physical culture, is very popular among the boys and girls of the town.

Of religious institutions, there are two *H a r i s a b h a s*, or halls for religious recital or meeting, established by the members of the Vaishnava sect. A few people collect here every evening either for community singing or *N a m a k i r t a n a*, or for the reading of religious books. In summer and autumn, there are four major celebrations at a place which was hallowed by the presence of Chaitanya and Nityananda four hundred

years ago. These celebrations attract many men and women ; but the daily attendance at the H a r i s a b h a compares very unfavourably with the attendance in libraries, sports clubs or cinemas.

A detailed examination of the 100 families interviewed showed clearly that, as the people become employed in the factories or in various capacities at different times of the day, e.g., shift work, the leisure time which they can afford becomes more or less broken up. In Amdabad, work was primarily agricultural, and was dictated by the seasons ; all people were busy in certain months and had more leisure in certain other months. Therefore, the entertainments, or the public recital of the sacred scriptures, the fairs and cinema shows, were all grouped together within the post-harvest months. In contrast to this, Panihati has no seasonal variation in activity ; work and leisure show personal variability. So the search for entertainment becomes also more personal in character, and consequently more diversified, than in the case of the rural area studied.

Not many, but some people, gather together in the afternoons and evenings, according to their shifts in the mills ; while the doctors and shopkeepers can hardly find any leisure till late at night. Under this indirect pressure of the factory system, the entertainment which people seek is, as the report of field work will show, limited to attendance in libraries or cinema shows, or games which engage four to twenty people at a time. These are indoor games like cards, carrom, ludo, or outdoor games like football and volley ball. There is also the radio which succeeds in bringing some joy to people in their own homes during their moments of leisure. Under these circumstances the people of Panihati have a wider choice of entertainment than the people of Amdabad. Thus, it has been difficult for the traditional forms of entertainment, such as we find in Amdabad, to survive as long as they have done in the latter place.

It is true that the cinemas and theatres also dispense some of the classical stories of India through a new medium ; but it should be noted that the character of these stories very often

undergoes a modification in the new media. In the songs of the Patidaras, or the reading of the sacred poems by Brahmins, the main emphasis is on devotion to God, although there may be elements of direct human appeal in such stories too. But in the theatrical form of the stories as presented through dramas published in Calcutta, or through the cinemas, the appeal is more on the human plane than on the plane of religious devotion.

The increasing personalization of leisure, accompanied as it has been by a secularization of interest, has led, on the whole, to a progressive decay of the traditional modes of transmission of culture. The place of the latter is now being taken by new modes which convey as much of the old culture as possible under the altered emotional climate of the age.

REPORT OF FIELD WORK

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(Received on 20th May, 1956)

I. Amdabad

THE village of Amdabad under the Police Station of Nandigram in the district of Midnapore, is situated 25 miles south of Tamluk, the Sub-divisional headquarters, 6 miles east of the Narghat-Kalinagore bus route.

Amdabad has a population of about 4,500 ; the caste groups found there are as follows :

Brāhmaṇa, Vaiṣṇava, Māhiṣya, Pauṇḍra Kṣatriya, Tānti (weaver), Kumāra (potter), Teli (oil-presser), Dule (palanquin bearer), Karaṅga (carpenter), Paṭidāra or Citrakara (painter), and a few Mohammedans.

Occupation, Caste by Caste

Higher Castes :

Brahmana	Vaishnava	Mahishya
Priesthood and land-holding.	Living by devotional songs and field labour.	Land-holding and cultivation.
Tanti	Kumara	Teli
Weaving and cultivation.	Pottery-making and cultivation.	Oil-extraction and cultivation.

Scheduled Castes :

Paundra Kshatriya	Dule	Karanga	Patidara
Land-holding and cultivation.	Palanquin bearing and day labour.	Wood-work and cultivation.	Living by exhibition of painted scrolls and image-making.

In addition to these castes, the Mohammedans are day labourers as well as cultivators.

Among the above-mentioned castes and communities, the Brahmana, Vaishnava and Patidara are engaged in religious pursuits or the arts as profession.

Brahmana

Number of Brahmana families studied	...	5
Number of individuals	...	28

(In each family, adult males were selected as informants.)

Brahmanas are entitled to propitiate deities on sacred occasions. They are also required to recite sacred verses from the B h a g a v a t a, and other scriptures. The B h a g a v a t a is recited specially in the month of Karttika (October-November), and sometimes on special occasions in fulfilment of some vow. A few well-to-do families, Mahishya by caste (at present there are five such families in the village of Amdabad), still have this traditional religious recital in their homes. On such an occasion, the oldest woman of the family (married or widowed) observes ceremonial restraint or s a m y a m a for the purpose of assistance on the sacred occasion. She takes only vegetarian food, does not use mustard oil when bathing, and takes her bath early in the morning. At about 10 a.m., the Brahmana priest comes and reads a chapter or two from the B h a g a v a t a; other elderly men and women of the family or the locality also attend. Reading is continued till the 30th of the month. The Brahmana is supposed to complete the reading in the course of the month, but generally only selected chapters are read. After the month of reading is over, the Brahmana is provided with a good feast and s i d h a, or presents consisting of rice (generally not less than 10 pounds), vegetables and spices. A few family priests of some well-to-do persons have been given a few bighas of cultivable land. In order to plough this land, the Brahmana employs labourers belonging to the Scheduled Castes, as Brahmanas cannot use the plough themselves without losing caste. The labourer is paid Rs.1-4-0 per day, but no meal.

The Brahmana also receives from twenty to thirty pounds of paddy every month from the families whose deities he attends to throughout the month. Sometimes the Brahmanas propitiate deities in neighbouring villages, if specially invited. Some have even been to Howrah, the next district, for this purpose. These Brahmanas are however not well read in Sanskrit, but have usually read only up to the primary standard.

According to my Brahmana informants, they are now facing

bad days. While their families increase, their incomes tend to diminish owing to the growing lack of interest in religious ceremonies among villagers in general.

The Brahmanas do not take cooked rice from any lower caste. If they are given the raw materials, then they themselves do the cooking in the houses of the lower castes. In Midnapore district, they accept water from the Mahishya and Vaishnava, but from no other caste. They accept cooked sweetmeats from higher castes only, and fruits only from people belonging to the Scheduled Castes.

In this village there are some degraded Brahmanas who serve the lower castes, such as Karangas or carpenters, whose water is not acceptable to superior Brahmanas. They have neither inter-dining nor inter-marriage with other Brahmanas, and they do not read the *Bhagavata*, but only propitiate the deities of the Scheduled Castes.

Number of families of degraded Brahmanas	...	5
Number of individuals	...	23

Vaishnava

There are two groups of Vaishnavas in this village : Group A sing traditional devotional songs and earn their living only in this way. They have no cultivable land. This group numbers three families with twenty-six individuals.

Group B is formed by those who belong to the Vaishnava sect, but do not earn their living by singing devotional songs. They are engaged in cultivation, but do not do the ploughing themselves, as they would lose in status thereby. Some of them have a few bighas of land. They work as day labourers in Brahmana or Mahishya homes. They employ men of the Scheduled Castes to plough their fields and pay them Rs.1-4-0 per day, along with one meal. This group numbers about fifty-five families with about one hundred and fifty members in all.

Though the Vaishnavas are thus divided into two groups on the basis of the means of livelihood, they are not distinguished from one another as 'high' and 'low'. Inter-marriage between them is allowed, inter-dining is also in vogue.

Number of families studied (Group A)	...	3
Number of individuals	...	26
Number of families studied (Group B)	...	5
Number of individuals	...	30

(In each family, the adult males were selected as informants.)

The mendicant Vaishnavas of this village sing devotional songs or *k i r t a n a*. During the months of Karttika (October-November), Magha (January-February), and Vaisakha (April-May) the Vaishnava sets out early in the morning with a companion who belongs to his family, and together they sing *k i r t a n a* from door to door. Both of them sing, while one plays on the *k h o l* (drum) and the other keeps time with the *k a r a t a l a* (cymbal). Either they sing the name of Vishnu, such as *H a r e K r i s h n a*, or they sing *M a t h u r a*, *G o s t h a* and *P a d a v a l i* songs. They sing at every house, including those of the Scheduled Castes ; but naturally not in the houses of Muslims. This goes on for one month and then they are paid. The payment is usually one pound of rice, some vegetables and spices from each household. On special occasions, the Vaishnava singer might be invited to recite the hundred and eight names of Krishna ; then the recital goes on for twenty-four hours without a break. The singers are paid sometimes one rupee, or perhaps twelve annas in cash, or twenty pounds of paddy in the minimum.

The Vaishnavas of Amdabad sometimes go outside the village to sing, when specially invited. They do not plough, but may engage in other types of work in the field.

The mendicant Vaishnavas possess homestead land only when it is given to them by some rich Mahishya farmer, but they do not have any paddy land.

If any well-to-do Mahishya, or any person of higher caste, dies, and if the Vaishnavas are informed, they accompany the funeral procession with religious songs. They also sing *k i r t a n a* during marriages and *s r a d d h a* ceremonies, when offerings are made to the manes. As remuneration, they receive a good feast and at least four pounds of rice, and sometimes in addition a piece of cloth for themselves or their wives.

The Vaishnavas accept cooked food from Brahmanas only.

From other castes they accept raw food-stuffs and do the cooking themselves. They accept fruits and sweets from all castes, but water only from high castes.

The Vaishnavas who sing devotional songs are illiterate. Yet each of them can sing songs composed by the poets Govindadasa or Chandidasa or Vidyapati. These songs, and the hundred and eight names of Krishna which they sing, are passed on orally.

Patidara or Chitrakara or Picture-makers

Two other villages, Kumirmara and Nankarchak, both under the Police Station of Nandigram, were also surveyed for the purpose of gaining further information about the Patidaras, also known as Chitrakaras or Patuyas, literally meaning 'those who make pictures'.

Village Kumirmara—Amdabad, Police Station Nandigram :

Number of families studied	... 11
Number of individuals	... 43

Village Nankarchak, Police Station Nandigram :

Number of families studied	... 22
Number of individuals	... 123

(The head of each family was selected as informant.)

The Patidaras are neither fully Hindu nor fully Mohammedan. They perform *nama*, or the Muslim form of prayer, and celebrate the Id festival in the Mohammedan fashion, but do not eat beef like other Muslims. Their marriage rites are performed by Muslim judges or Kazis, according to Islamic law; but the Kazi is not allowed to interfere in any other social affair. Marriages are strictly limited to their own group or caste, and no marriage takes place with any other member of the Muslim community. The Patidaras have retained Hindu names and worship Hindu deities like Shitala or Visvakarma; but this is done without the help of Brahmana priests. Elderly men belonging to the caste perform the necessary rites.

The Chitrakaras or Patidaras do not accept cooked food and water from Muslims, or from Hindus belonging to the Scheduled Castes. Nor do they exhibit their scrolls or sing

songs in the homes of the latter. They accept food and water only from high caste Hindus ; but fruit and sweets from all castes, including Muslims. But the high castes and the scheduled ones do not accept water or cooked food from the Patidara. The local Mohammedans also do not accept food or water from them.

In the villages, they get a small present of rice (two to three ounces) and vegetables for each performance. On rare occasions, they also get a piece of cloth. In the towns, or in some homes in the village, they get a few annas in cash as remuneration. Their traditional and principal business is to exhibit painted scrolls and sing the traditional explanatory verses as the scrolls are gradually unfolded. The scroll is twenty-five feet to fifty feet in length and can be rolled up like a wall map. These are never made for sale as works of art ; but are looked upon by the Patidaras as their chief wealth. In preparing the scrolls, they spend from six rupees for a small one to about ten rupees for a big one. The scrolls are painted and made by the men themselves on sheets of ordinary paper. Formerly, according to my informants, their forefathers used hand-made paper and indigenous colours, such as charcoal for black, chalk for white, lac dye or the juice of the ripe *t e l a k u c h a* fruit for red, and so on. Now they use foreign paints.

The Patidaras of Amdabad do their painting themselves, but in the village of Nankarchak, there is only one man who can do so. The others therefore have to buy scrolls from him for Rs. 7 to Rs. 10 for every scroll.

The Patidaras also make earthen idols of different gods and goddesses, e. g., Kali, Durga, Manasā, Sarasvatī, during the different celebrations ; and these fetch from Rs. 3 to Rs. 35, according to the size of the idol. In making these idols and the scrolls, the son or the daughter or the wife assists the Patidara.

The Patidaras go to the neighbouring villages within a radius of four miles in order to exhibit their scrolls. When cultivation is over, usually from the last part of January to March, the men wander with their scrolls from village to village. All of my informants have toured in different villages and towns of

Bankura, Birbhum and Midnapore districts. Some have also gone as far afield as Baleswar, Jamshedpur, and other places in Orissa and Bihar.

In the villages, we found that the Patidaras generally exhibit their scrolls from 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. The subject matter of the scrolls is taken from the :

R a m a y a n a : The Abduction of Sita, the Death of Ravana the episode in which Lakshmana lay wounded in battle, and so on.

B h a g a v a t a : The exploits of Krishna.

M a h a b h a r a t a : The story of the human sacrifice, Savitri and her husband Satyavan, the story of benevolent King Karna, and so on.

M a n g a l a poems : Relating to the goddesses Manasa or Chandi.

Each scroll opens with a large-sized portrait of the deity, this being followed by a series of pictures illustrating his or her awards to, or punishment of mankind. Interesting scenes are carefully selected and painted.

The women make toys of clay by free-hand modelling or of clay sheets cast in terracotta moulds. These toys are generally sun-baked, but sometimes are also baked in fire. They make idols of different gods and goddesses, toys of a particular kind, known as *a l h a d i p u t u l*, figures of different birds and animals such as tigers, elephants, parrots or peacocks. These toys are painted in many colours. Foreign paints are now used. The toys are not sold in the weekly markets but in fairs held during winter months. The price of such toys varies from two pice to four annas. My informants said that in the fairs both men and women sell these toys. But in the village of Jahnabad, three miles from Amdabad, where a fair was held during the last day of Pausha, only men were found selling the toys which had been made by women.

At present the Patidaras are in an extremely poverty-stricken condition. All of them are in debt. They are all landless, and therefore live on other people's land and pay rent. Moreover, new competitors from other castes, such as Mahishya or Kumara are now taking away their trade.

General Observations

The above three communities of the village of Amdabad carry on the tradition of fine arts for recreational as well as socio-religious purposes. These arts were warmly appreciated by the villagers. The Patidara, the Brahmana and the Vaishnava satisfied the villagers until the new recreational methods such as cinemas and theatres were introduced. Now the villagers say that the former are monotonous, while the latter provide more variety.

In the village of Amdabad there are theatrical parties of the old type who perform *yatra*. They move from place to place on different terms when cash is paid to them for performance. But the local people no longer like the *yatra* party of their own village. Students are very fond of the amateur theatres and their attempts are supported by the elders. No radio set was found in the village, but two families possess gramophones, while harmoniums were found in four houses. The old people like to hear *bhatali* and *kirtana* songs while the younger people prefer modern songs, including songs popularized by the Indian People's Theatrical Association, which is an organization with politically leftist inclinations. Such songs are introduced in the village by students who often visit Tamluk or other neighbouring towns. Cinema songs are liked by all, and the people are eager to see the cinema. Last year, a travelling cinema company camped for about one month in the village of Amdabad. Young and old men go on foot to see cinemas at Teropekhia, 10 miles away, whenever there is a fair there. The older people of the village this year have invited a travelling cinema company to give shows in Amdabad. The films usually shown are more of a social than religious nature.

In the village of Amdabad there are 9 clubs of which details are given below :

1. *Bani Mandir* (established in 1945); members, 231. The club had a library, but all the books have now been donated to the Amdabad High English School library. Five Bengali magazine are regularly subscribed to. A hand-written quarterly

magazine is issued by the club. The members of the club stage at least two dramas every year. Sometimes the members undertake village uplift work voluntarily.

2. *Sa bu j Sa ng ha* (established in 1951); members, 120. The library has 230 books. Two Bengali dailies are subscribed to. The only other activity is to stage at least one drama every year.

3. *Ka ly a n Sa ng ha* (established in 1955); members, 222. The library has 230 books; one weekly and one daily newspaper are subscribed to. The members staged one drama last year. They also do some village work, such as clearing tanks or supplying drinking water in the village market place.

4. *Su b ha s Pa th a ga r* (established in 1950); members, 124. The library has 283 books. Several bi-weekly Bengali magazines are subscribed to. The members stage two dramas every year.

5. *Pr a n a b Ma n di r* (established in 1951); members, 113. The library has 160 books. Three monthly and one daily paper are subscribed to. The members of the club conduct village festivals.

6. *S re e Go ur a ng a Pa th a ga r* (established in 1952); members, 135. The library has 117 books. One bi-weekly Bengali newspaper is subscribed to. The members stage at least one drama every year.

7. *Vi ve ka na n da Pa th a ga r* (established in 1948); members, 140. There are 160 books in the library; one weekly magazine and one daily paper are subscribed to. The club helps poor students by lending text books, etc.

8. *Ku mi r ma ra Pa l li ma ng al Sa mi ti* (established in 1953); members, 130. The library has 114 books. The members do village uplift work. At least one drama is staged every year.

9. *San sk rit ik An us th an or Ha ri ba sa r* (established in 1951); members, 116. This club has no library. The members of this club help members of other clubs in their activities.

All the clubs possess at least one harmonium.

The games section of the schools has football, volley ball

and badminton. The students are very fond of playing such games.

II. Panihati

Panihati, a municipal town, is 10 miles from Calcutta and is connected with it by bus and railway. It is an ancient village situated on the left bank of the Ganga. It was formerly a big business centre (Panyahatta, Panihati, or Penity, meaning 'market for merchandise'), as well as a centre of Shakti worship. Later on the Vaishnava saint Nityananda stayed here according to the instruction of Sri Chaitanya, and since then, the place has been regarded as a sacred pilgrimage by the Vaishnava sect of Bengal. The town contains many shrines of different gods and goddesses, such as Kali, Siva, Gauranga, Annapurna.

The Bengal Chemical Works, the Basanti and Bangodaya Cotton Mills, Swadeshi Industries, and many other big factories are situated within the area of the town.

The majority of the residents are Brahmana and Kayastha by caste, but there are the following castes also ; Vaiṣṇava, Śūdra, Kṣatriya, Dhobā (washerman), Tāntī (weaver), Nāpita (barber), Telī (oil presser), Suvarṇa-Vaṇik (goldsmith and banker), Kāmsya Vaṇik (metal smith) Kumāra (potter), Dhīvara or Jele (fisherman).

The population of the town, according to the Census of 1951, was 49,574 (1941 : 47,410 ; 1931 : 11,699 ; 1921 : 10,161 ; 1911 : 11,118 ; 1901 : 11,178). But at present, due to recent refugee influx from East Pakistan, that figure has increased very much. There are three refugee colonies within the limits of the town.

No one in the town has cultivable land. The people earn their living either by business or by office work, or by both. There is no trace of the traditional system of occupation (*vide* the chart depicting economic conditions, etc.).

For recreation there are the following cultural institutions :

Clubs

There are two clubs, one registered (established in 1914), and the other not registered (established in 1950). The members

play only indoor games like cards and carrom. One club, however, has an outdoor section in which volley ball is played. In this club students above 15 years of age may come and play indoor games, but the members must be wage earners. Here the admission fee is 8 annas, and the monthly subscription, 4 annas. The number of members is 60.

In the older registered club, there is a library containing 2,500 books. In the library, students as well as adults are members. In this club, too, students and wage-earners form the majority of members. Here the admission fee is Re.1, and the monthly subscription 6 annas. Besides members, anybody may come in and read books when the the library is open. In the library, newspapers, film magazines and other literary magazines, both English and Bengali, are subscribed to. The library section has no magazine of its own, but an annual competition in story-writing is arranged among the members of this section. The number of members is 141. Each of the above-mentioned clubs stages at least two dramas every year.

Registered Library

This library established in 1898 has two sections, one for adults and the other for children. It has 10,407 books. The number of members is 253. Besides members, anybody may come in and read books during library hours. Different magazines on literature, both English and Bengali, are subscribed to. The club has its own magazine and wall-newspaper. At least two dramas are staged by the club annually. The birthday as well as the death of Tagore, and many other such dates, are observed by the club. The club has also a musical section. The library is open in the evening. Here the admission fee is 8 annas, monthly subscription 6 annas, while a deposit of Rs. 2 has to be paid against loss or damage of books.

Health Culture Centre

This was established in 1947 ; members, 42. The latter are above 10 years of age. They meet the actual expenses by voluntary contribution. Here both free-hand and exercises with various kinds of apparatus are performed. Instruction is given by experienced local teachers .

Sports Club

Established in 1898, and registered. The number of life members is 37. There are junior and senior sections. The club is very well established and well reputed, and has produced many successful players. The club has also a swimming section, a physical culture section, and foot-ball, volley-ball and cricket sections, while there is also an agriculture and fishery section. Both boys and girls can join the club. Generally students are its members.

As has been mentioned, there are three refugee colonies in the town. In each of these three colonies, there is a welfare society, P a l l i m a n g a l S a m i t i, the members of which are the residents of the colonies. In these societies, the members do relief work in their own colony, and meet together socially.

Labour Welfare Centre

This is run by the West Bengal Government. Members are industrial workers with their children. Membership is free. At present there are 179 members. The centre has an outdoor play section for foot-ball, volley-ball and badminton, and an indoor games section for cards, dice and carrom. There is a library of 630 books. Magazines on literary subjects and on films are subscribed to. The centre has no magazine of its own. Dramas and musical functions are performed by the club. There is a charitable dispensary, and a physical culture section is also attached to it. Local people may read books or play indoor games, though not members.

Cinema

There is a cinema house within the village, and in the field of recreation it seems to be the chief centre of attraction.

Religious Associations

Besides these institutions, there are two religious institutions, or H a r i s a b h a s. These H a r i s a b h a s have been established by members of the Vaishnava sect. One of them has no membership system, and anybody may attend. The other has five branches in five p a r a s, or wards within the same village. In the second H a r i s a b h a there are 25 members who pay 2 annas per month. All the members are Vaishnavas, but elderly local people who are not Vaishnava also attend. The

regular attendance in each *Harisabha* varies from four to six. In the evening, in these *Harisabhas*, devotional songs or *kirtana* are sung, and verses from the *Bhagavata Purana* or other religious books are recited. On special occasions devotional songs, *astaprahara kirtana*, are sung for twenty-four hours.

In the *Mahostavā-talā* (the place where Nityananda is supposed to have stayed), every year four fairs are arranged in the months of *Jaistha* (May-June), *Karttika* (October-November), *Chaitra* (March-April) and *Agrahayana* (November-December). During the celebration, *Vaishnavas* and people of all castes come from different places and join the ceremony. During the celebration, devotional songs are sung for twenty-four hours, and verses from the sacred scriptures, such as the *Bhagavata* or *Chaitanya Charitamrita* are recited by pandits, and feasts are arranged. The expenses are collected from the *Vaishnavas* or other citizens and also from those who come from outside to attend the celebration. It is the *Harisabhas* which arrange these *Mahotsavas* or 'great festivals'.

All the *Vaishnavas* of *Panihati* work either in office or are in business. They perform religious ceremonies when they come home after office hours.

During my stay, there were theatrical performances in three sections of the town. These were financed by the people of the respective localities, but at the same time, people from other localities took part in the theatres. In the month of March, a lady from *Chandernagore* (married and *Brahmana* by caste) was invited by a wealthy local person to recite verses from the *Bhagavata* for six days (three days in the yard of the *Kali* temple and three days in the yard of the *Radhakrishna* temple). Her charges were Rs. 25 per night, plus board and lodging. I personally attended these readings, where I found that more than half of the audience was made up of women (most of them elderly), and the rest of elderly men. Only a few young people were present.

The town is served by the *Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation*. About five houses have radio sets and harmoniums. A few boys and girls practise singing *Adhunikā*, *Rabindra Sangita* (Tagore's songs) and classical songs. Their teachers come from *Calcutta*, *Dakshineswar* or *Rishra*.

Chart showing the economic background of, and the use of leisure in, 100 families in the municipal town of Panhati, West Bengal, during the month of February, 1956.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
1	Vaiṣṇava	1	30	Barber	5	Evening	—	—	—	Every evening attends Harisabhā and sings kirtana.
2	"	1	40	"	2	"	—	—	—	As above.
3	Mālā (Jele)	1	60	Office messenger	4	5 p.m.	1	4	—	—
4	Brāhmaṇa	1	60	Office work	4	6 p.m.	2	—	—	Sometimes plays cards with his family.
5	Vaidya	1	60	Āyurvedic physician	2	—	—	4	—	Reads books on Āyurveda. Sometimes goes to club.
6	Kāyastha	1	60	Mill work	3	6 a.m. to 10 a.m. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.	1	4	—	Shift work : 15 days from 12 to 10 p.m. ; 15 days from 10 p.m. to 12 noon.
7	Vaiṣṇava	1	60	Office work	3	7 p.m.	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā, sings kirtana in the evening.
8	Brāhmaṇa	1	70	"	7	"	—	—	—	Regularly attends religious circle.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Litera- ture	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
9	Vaiṣṇava	1	70	Business	6	Evening	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā.
10	Brāhmaṇa	1	70	Office work	5	7 p.m.	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā. Practises classical music.
11	Dhobā	1	70	"	2	6 p.m.	2-4-0	4	—	—
12	Kāyastha	1	70	Mill worker	1	6 a.m. to 10 a.m. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.	2-8-0	4	—	Shift work : 15 days from 12 noon to 10 p.m. and 15 days from 10 p.m. to 12 noon.
13	Kumāra	1	70	"	7	As above	1-0-0	4	—	As above.
14	Kāyastha	1	70	"	2	6 p.m.	1-4-0	4	—	"
15	"	1	70	"	5	"	2-0-0	6	—	"
16	Mālā (Jete)	1	80	Business	3	7 p.m.	2-0-0	—	8 to 10	Catches fish, sells in the market : when not work- ing 'passes the time'; often drinks country liquor.
17	Kāyastha	1	80	Office work	1	"	7-0-0	4	—	—
18	Tānti	1	80	Tailor	8	9 p.m.	1-8-0	4	—	—
19	Vaidya	1	80	Business	4	6 a.m. to 9 a.m.	1-0-0	4	—	Except on Sunday, he has no time in the evening.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation		Remarks
							Cinema	Club Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.
20	Vaiṣṇava	1	80	Barber and Office Messenger	4	—	—	—	Has no time, except on Sundays, when he attends Harisabhā.
21	"	1	80	Mill worker	1	7 p.m.	—	—	In off-time sings kirtana and attends Harisabhā.
22	"	1	80	Teacher	5	—	—	—	On Sundays, attends Harisabhā. On week-days serves as a coach to school- boys.
23	Kāyastha	1	85	Clerk	2	5 p.m.	2-8-0	4	—
24	Teḷi	1	90	Business	6	—	—	—	Sells earthenware. In off-time does domestic duties.
25	Kumāra	1	90	Factory worker	6	6 p.m.	—	4	Job in Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works.
26	Vaidya	1	100	"	7	7 p.m.	—	4	As above.
27	Kāyastha	1	100	"	5	6 p.m.	1-0-0	—	"
28	Dhobā	1	100	Tailor	4	9 p.m.	3-0-0	4	—
29	Kānsya Vanik	1	100	Factory worker	5	6 p.m.	—	—	2-4-0

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
30	Brāhmaṇa	1	100	Factory worker	5	7 p.m.	—	4	—	Performs domestic duties in off-time.
31	Vaiṣṇava	1	100	Goldsmith	2	Evening	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā.
32	"	1	100	Factory worker	6	7 p.m.	—	—	—	"
33	"	1	100	"	6	7 p.m.	1-4-0	4	—	Occasionally attends Harisabhā.
34	Brāhmaṇa	2	110	Artist, Teacher	4	Both have free time only on Sundays	2-0-0	4	—	Both give tuition.
35	"	1	110	Factory worker	6	7 p.m.	—	4	—	—
36	Kāyastha	1	120	"	3	8 a.m. to 10 a.m. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.	—	6	—	Shift work : 15 days from 12 noon to 10 p.m., 15 days from 10 p.m. to 12 noon.
37	Brāhmaṇa	1	120	Office work	5	7 p.m.	—	4	—	—
38	"	1	120	"	4	8 p.m.	—	6	2-4-0	—
39	Vaiṣṇava	1	120	"	4	7 p.m.	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā.
40	Brāhmaṇa	1	125	"	2	7 p.m.	—	6	2-4-0	—

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
41	Brāhmana	1	125	Office work	4	7 p.m.	—	2	—	Attends Harisabhā.
42	Vaidya	1	125	"	3	6 p.m.	2-0-0	4	2-4-0	—
43	Brāhmana	1	130	"	4	8 p.m.	—	6	2-4-0	—
44	Kāyastha	2	140	"	2	7 p.m. (both)	4-8-0	14	—	—
45	"	1	150	"	4	8 p.m.	1-4-0	4	—	—
46	Brāhmana	1	150	"	5	Sunday only	4-8-0	—	—	—
47	"	1	150	"	4	7 p.m.	—	—	2-4-0	Gardening.
48	Kāyastha	1	150	"	5	8 p.m.	2-0-0	4	—	—
49	Vaiṣṇava	1	150	"	9	7 p.m.	—	2	—	Attends Harisabhā.
50	"	1	150	"	6	6 p.m.	—	2	—	"
51	Kāṁśya Vanik	2	150	Office work, goldsmithery	7	6 p.m.	2-0-0	4	—	The goldsmith has free time only on Sundays, the other regularly, at 6 p.m.
52	Brāhmana	2	150	Office work	6	Sunday only	2-8-0	—	2-4-0	Coaches school boys every afternoon privately, except on Sundays.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Litera- ture	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
53	Vaidya	2	150	Office work	4	9 p.m. (both)	3-0-0	4	—	—
54	Kāyastha	3	150	"	4	7 p.m. (all)	2-4-0	4	—	One attends a religious circle, one practises music, the third goes to a club.
55	"	1	150	"	7	5 p.m.	2-4-0	4	—	—
56	"	1	150	Mill work	3	6 a.m. to 10 a.m. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.	2-4-0	4	—	Shift work : 15 days from 12 noon to 10 p.m., 15 days from 10 p.m. to 10 noon,
57	Brāhmaṇa	2	160	Office work, teaching	3	6 p.m.	1-4-0	4	—	Teacher is free only on Sundays.
58	Vaiṣṇava	3	170	Office work	5	8 p.m. (all)	—	6	—	All attend Harisabhā.
59	Kāyastha	1	175	"	6	6 p.m.	1-0-0	—	—	In off-time practises on the tablā or drum.
60	Brāhmaṇa	2	180	"	4	One after 9 p.m.; other, 4 p.m.	7-0-0	6	—	—

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
61	Brāhmana	2	180	Office work	3	6 p.m. (both)	5-0-0	8	—	—
62	Kāyastha	2	180	"	3	7 p.m. (both)	2-0-0	4	—	—
63	Brāhmana	2	185	"	6	"	3-8-0	8	—	One comes to Calcutta to see cinemas,
64	Vaiśya	1	200	Dispensary	10	—	1-2-0	4	—	Has practically no time except on Sundays.
65	Kāyastha	1	200	Retired on pension	3	—	2-8-0	6	3-0-0	Unemployed son goes to the cinema while the father goes to Harisabha.
66	Brāhmana	2	200	Office work	7	7 p.m. (both)	2-0-0	8	—	—
67	Kāyastha	2	200	"	9	"	1-0-0	4	—	—
68	"	1	200	"	4	7 p.m.	1-0-0	4	2-4-0	—
69	Brāhmana	2	200	Office work, homoeopathic physician	—	—	—	—	—	Doctor reads medical books in his off-time, the other goes to club,
70	Kāyastha	1	200	Office work	7	7 p.m.	2-8-0	6	—	—

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Litera- ture	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
71	Brāhmaṇa	1	200	Office work	6	6-30 p.m.	2-0-0	6	—	—
72	Kāyastha	1	200	"	9	7 p.m.	—	4	—	—
73	Vaiṣṇava	1	200	Goldsmith	2	Evening	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā.
74	Brāhmaṇa	3	215	Office work	4	7 p. m. (all)	4-8-0	6	3-0-0	—
75	Kāyastha	2	215	"	6	7 p.m. (both)	—	4	—	Both interested in gardening.
76	Brāhmaṇa	2	220	"	3	7-30 p.m. (both)	5-0-0	4	—	One has time after 7-30 p.m. and listens to the radio, the other goes to club.
77	"	1	225	"	8	6 p.m.	—	—	2-4-0	Gardening.
78	"	2	240	"	3	9 p.m.	—	6	2-4-0	—
79	"	2	240	"	4	7 p.m. (both)	1-0-0	12	—	—
80	Telī	2	250	Office work, business	5	8 p.m.	2-0-0	4	—	The businessman has spare time only on Sundays, the other after 8 p.m. on week- days.
81	Brāhmaṇa	1	250	Office work and business	5	Sundays only	3-0-0	4	—	After office work super- vises own business.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
82	Brāhmana	2	250	Office work, homoeopathic physician	6	8-30 p.m.	—	—	—	Both attend Harisabhā in the evening after 8-30 p.m.
83	Vaidya	3	250	Office work	7	7 p.m.	8-0-0	8	—	One attends Harisabhā occasionally.
84	Vaiṣṇava	2	250	"	9	7 p.m. (both)	—	8	—	Attends Harisabhā every Sunday.
85	Kāyastha	2	260	"	6	"	2-0-0	8	—	—
86	Śūdra	2	260	"	3	6 p.m. (both)	4-0-0	6	—	Listens to radio.
87	Brāhmana	2	260	"	4	7 p.m. (both)	1-0-0	12	2-4-0	—
88	Vaiṣṇava	2	275	"	6	7 p.m.	—	14	—	Attends Harisabhā.
89	Brāhmana	3	300	"	7	8 p.m. (all)	4-0-0	12	3-0-0	—
90	Kāyastha	2	300	"	12	7 p.m. (all)	3-0-0	6	—	—
91	Vaiṣṇava	2	300	"	2	7 p.m. (both)	—	—	—	Attends Harisabhā and listens to radio.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
92	Brāhmaṇa	4	375	3 is office work, 1 in business	10	7 p.m.	3-0-0	1-0-0	2-4-0	Businessman has time only on Sundays, the others every day after 7 p.m.
93	"	3	390	2 is office work, 1 in business	6	"	6-0-0	0-6-0	2-4-0	Businessman has time only on Sundays, the others after 7 p.m. listen to radio.
94	Kāṁśya Vanik	1	400	Goldsmithery	6	—	2-0-0	0-4-0	—	Has time only on Sundays, on other days after 9 p.m. listens to radio.
95	Brāhmaṇa	4	435	Office work	17	7 p.m. (all)	7-0-0	1-12-0	—	Head of the family attends Harisabhā.
96	Kāyastha	4	450	"	11	8 p.m. (all)	2-8-0	0-6-0	—	Two of them go to clubs, the other two sing kirtana at home. All listen to radio.
97	Brāhmaṇa	4	600	"	24	7 p.m. (all)	6-0-0	2-0-0	2-4-0	Listen to radio.
98	"	5	650	"	16	7 p.m.	10-0-0	2-0-0	2-4-0	Elderly head of the family attends Harisabhā regularly. All listen to radio.

Number	Caste	Earning mem- bers	Monthly income	Source of income	Number of dependants	Leisure time	Expenditure on recreation			Remarks
							Cinema	Club	Literature	
			Rs.				Rs.	As.	Rs.	
99	Ksatriya	2	2000	Business	15	Sundays, and 9 p.m. regularly	20-0-0	15-0-0	5-0-0	Well-established businessmen owning rice mills, etc. Last month they went once to Calcutta to a theatre. They have also radio sets.
100	Vaisnava	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	He could not say much about his income. He is sevayat of the Gaurāṅga image on the spot where Mahāprabhu arrived and stayed. Pilgrims come to see this place. He maintains himself on their charity.

EXPRESSION OF SENTIMENTS IN THE SONGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE KARAM FESTIVAL OF RURAL MANBHUM (BIHAR, INDIA)*

by SURAJIT SINHA

Calcutta

(Received on 21st December, 1956)

THE relevance of the study of folklore to the study of the culture of a people has been emphasized by Boas on the one hand and Malinowski on the other. While Boas emphasized the aspect of how folklore reflects culture, Malinowski pointed to the role of myths and folklore as explicit sanctions and guides to action.

Bascom, in a way following Malinowski, emphasized the point that folklore has to be studied in relation to the actual behaviour of a people: '...it can no longer be possible to regard folklore simply as a true and accurate mirror of culture, or to ignore the basic importance of investigating the actual behaviour in any society, the ideal patterns of any culture, and the attitude of any people whose folklore is to be interpreted...' (1954: 344).

On the background of the above discussion, we shall attempt to indicate how folk-songs during a particular festival in southern Manbhum give expression to sentiments on social relationship which have a direct bearing on the structural setting of society. They reflect tensions present in the social structure, and by giving institutionalized expression to them, probably provide a healing effect.

The Karam festival is celebrated throughout the district of Manbhum on the eleventh day of Bhado (August-September). The festival is observed only in those families where some child, buffalo, cow or goat was born on a this sacred date. Although the festival is not organized on a community basis,

*The paper was read at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Section of the American Folklore Society held at Bloomington, Indiana, in May, 1955.

villagers make it a point to visit the participating families to share the fun, and thus the village as a whole shares in it.

A few days before the date of the festival, the unmarried or recently married girls in an extended family go out with a new basket made of split bamboo to the riverside and fill it with sand. They then pour some turmeric solution into it; whereafter, some grains of rice, corn, oilseeds and other locally grown crops are sprinkled into the basket. This basket, called *Jawa dali*, is kept on a wooden stool or *machila* inside the house. Every evening, those who have taken the vow to perform the ceremony, take out the basket on the stool and place it in the centre of the household courtyard. They then dance around the basket counter-clockwise singing typical Karam songs. After this the basket is taken back inside the house. This is repeated every evening, for 3, 5, 7, or some odd number of days.

Early in the morning on the day of the festival, the avowed girls go out to collect paddy seedlings and lotuses to decorate the basket which is done just at dusk. The male head of the family goes to a specific *karam* (*Nuclea parvifolia*) tree and cuts two branches from it. These two branches are planted vertically in the centre of the courtyard and the *Jawa dali* basket rests between them. The avowed girls assemble in the courtyard, each with an offering of an earthen lamp and a cucumber which symbolizes a child. The head of the family kneels in front of the *karam* branches and offers milk, clarified butter, vermilion, pancakes made of rice-flour etc., to the deity of Karam. After this he sits unmoved with folded arms outstretched before him; while another person recites the story of the Karam festival either from memory or from a printed book.

When this is over, the girls dance around the courtyard for some time. Then it is the turn for a professional dancing girl, who is hired for the occasion, to dance in association with her manager. She is followed by a group of drummers and flutists. The meaning of the songs sung while the professional dancer is performing have no direct bearing on the central theme of the Karam festival, and the dance itself does not form a

ritually essential part of the festival. The dance continues for the whole night.

On the following morning, the Jawa dali and karam branches are carried by the girls to the neighbouring tank or stream and thrown into it. They return home in a very sad mood and this marks the end of the festival.

It is important to note that girls never miss an opportunity of going back to their parental home to attend the festival. They eagerly look forward to the occasion when they can join their parents and brothers and have a few days of care-free life. There is a local saying, 'While Dharam festival is for the welfare of the husband, Karam festival is for the welfare of the brothers.' On the whole, the festival seems to nucleate round three major themes: married girls expressing sentimental ties with the parental family, as against husbands' relations; fertility of women and fertility of crops.

Though all of these themes can be located in the rituals, the songs seem to be entirely concerned with revealing the deep sentiment of the married girls for their father's family.

Before we proceed to present the songs in translation, it may be worthwhile to say something about the local pattern of social structure. This geographical area contains some thirty or more different endogamous communities which we may label as castes. These castes are divided into patrilineal exogamous clans which, with the exception of a few tribal castes, have no territorial cohesion. These clans are segmented into lineages, which might be labelled as maximal, major, minor, minimal, and so on, in terms of order of segmentation. The basic operative social unit, however, is the joint family or simple patrilocal family with patrilineal extended ties. There is considerable male dominance in social life.

In this connection, we may also briefly refer to the marriage customs. Although, in the old culture pattern of the Mundari group of tribes, adult marriage and marriage by love or elopement was considered regular, Bengali Hindu influences in the area for the last few hundred years have been responsible for the introduction of prestige connotations for the early marriage of girls, arranged by their guardians. For most of the

castes, marriage entails payment of bride-price. The young married girl has to strictly obey the dictates of her mother-in-law.

All these factors together make the girl develop a sort of aversion for the husband's family, while there grows a deep compensatory urge to idealize and long for the affectionate setting of the parental home. Compared to the exacting demands for sexual gratification and the authority of the relatively aged husband, the brother's behaviour appears as a model of friendliness. This initial maladjustment, however, gradually tones down as the bride grows up, bears children and replaces the authority of the mother-in-law in the house. Our collection of songs will be found to revolve mainly around this core factor of tension in the kinship structure.*

Songs indicating sentimental ties of the married girls for their parents' family as against the husband's relatives —emphasizing the sweet relationship with their brothers :

(1)

The forest, the forest,
Where the ants cannot move ;
There comes my brother
Even through the forest.

Welcome to you, Brother,
And sit on the stool
Tell me, Oh Brother,
Of the joys and sorrows at home.

What am I to tell you, Sister,
Our mother died,
She died six months ago.

My mother died,
And you did not tell me about it ;
Brother, I am an orphan today.

*The following songs were collected in August, 1950, from the girls in the house of Chhutu Kamar, a blacksmith of the village of Ketunga,

(2)

Big drops of rain fall under the banyan tree
 Elder sister is getting soaked under the banyan tree ;
 Elder sister is lucky to be on the way home ;
 She bathed in the Ganges as she came home.

(3)

I n d-K a r a m festival is near
 And my husband has come to take me with him,
 How am I to refuse him ?
 He is waiting for me.

I will not go with my husband,
 I will not go.
 He moves the whip on my nose all the day.

I n d-K a r a m festival is near
 And my D e o r¹ has come to take me with him,
 How am I to refuse him ?
 He is waiting for me

I will not go with my D e o r I will not go,
 The whole day will be spent in giggles and play.

I n d-K a r a m festival is near
 And my B h a s u r² has come to take me with him,
 How am I to refuse him ?
 He is waiting for me.

I will not go with my B h a s u r
 I will not go,
 The whole day will be gone
 In covering my face with a veil.

I n d-K a r a m festival is near
 And my S a s u r³ has come to take me with him.
 How am I to refuse him ?
 He is waiting for me.

¹ D e o r : Husband's younger brother.

² B h a s u r : Husband's elder brother.

³ S a s u r : Father-in-law.

I will not go with my S a s u r,

I will not go.

The whole day will be gone

In carrying his hookah.

I n d-K a r a m festival is near

And my N a n a d⁴ has come to take me with her.

How am I to refuse her ?

She is waiting for me.

I will not go with my N a n a d,

I will not go.

The whole day will be gone

In handling her moods.

(4)

The father's house has high plinth ;

The father-in-law's plinth is low.

How did father choose

This family for me ?

It is your bad luck, Daughter !

And my eyes are to be blamed.

I saw the boy

And selected him for marriage-

(5)

I pluck basketful of j h i n g a

And many more too,

I got my daughter married in the village ;

Now there is no end to my agonies.

(6)

A handful of s a r g u n j a seeds

Shines in deep red.

My daughter is married in a far-away village ;

My heart weeps for her.

⁴ N a n a d : Husband's sister.

(7)

As the k a s i flower blooms
I look towards my father's village.
There comes my brother
In graceful steps.

(8)

The father-in-law's house is in the maize field.
Don't ask me to go there.
Then I will plunge into the flowing river,
I am going to plunge into it.

(9)

Twelve cubits long silk s a r i
With thirteen cubits wide border.
I stumbled on the border
And the pitcher broke.
Let the pitcher break, let it break.
I will give him the price,
I am not going to bear his beatings any more.

(10)

Brother, you were born in the king's court ;
And my birth has been in a stranger's place.
Brother, your food is milk and rice ;
Mine is a cup of rice gruel.
Brother, your cloth is shining with glitter ;
My cloth is torn to pieces.

(11)

By the side of the hillock,
Who walks in such graceful steps ?
It must be my brother.
With silver bangles on both wrists
And a bead necklace around the neck,
This must be my brother.

(12)

A day-old turmeric paste
And three-days old stale rice ;

Brother, tell my father and tell my mother
How happy I am here.

The mother heard about it
The father heard about it
And so also the next-born brother.
The daughter began weeping at her mother's place.

(13)

I pluck j h i n g a fruits in bunches,
And many more bunches.
I got married as a child
And now my heart is black with sorrow.

(14)

Father's house is on the upper side of the road ;
Father-in-law's house is on the lower.
The big river is in spate between the two.

Bring the brass plank
I will make a boat
I will cross the Kansai river in a moment.

Resentment against marrying an aged husband :

(1)

I had to go with my old husband
On the road to Bankura ;
People asked me who was he,
In my shame I said, 'Grandfather'.

(2)

I pluck vegetables and leaves
Under the s i m u l tree behind the house ;
You got a hundred rupees, Brother,
And sold me to this old husband.

Jealousy against elder brother's wife :

(1)

The silk s a r i with decorated border
Hanging from the rack.

My brother is buying s a r i.
 The s a r i is for your wife, Brother,
 And for me only coarse cloth.
 Brother, the sister has no honour any more.

(2)

My mother is gone to her father's house ;
 My father is gone to his father-in-law's house ;
 Now the elder brother's wife quarrels all the time.

(3)

A cup of rice gruel
 And only a pinch of salt ;
 See, my Elder Brother,
 How virtuous is your wife.

(4)

Elder brother goes for shopping ;
 Father goes for trading ;
 The Hunch-back⁵ goes to the city.
 Elder brother brings coloured s a r i ;
 Father brings s a r i from Dacca ;
 The Hunch-back brings torn clothes for me.

(5)

Elder brother eats bread,
 Father also eats bread ;
 The Hunch-back looks for rice gruel.
 Push her into the oven.

(6)

Mother dances in the inner room ;
 Sister dances in the middle room.
 The Hunch-back dances in the cowdung heap ;
 The Hunch-back dances in dirt.

(7)

Mango leaves and j a m leaves,
 I shall mix together and cook.

⁵ The hunch-back : a derogatory reference to elder brother's wife.

As elder brother's wife asks for it
I will twist my face.

(8)

Wives of our brothers
Are positively notorious.
They go to sleep in the shed instead of at home.^a
The house breaks down,
The shed is burnt,
And the wicked women go to join the Karam dances.

Resentment against the authority of the mother-in-law :

(1)

All around the hillocks
Grow green vegetables in plenty.
But mother-in-law cooks the same boiled rice.
You may serve the boiled rice, Mother-in-law,
You may serve it if you like,
I shall eat and drink milk at father's house.

(2)

A bowl of rice gruel
And only a few grains of rice.
Why do you act like this ?
Oh, Mother-in-law !

Feelings against husband's sister :

(1)

We husk g u n d l i grains, we husk g u n d l i grains ;
The grains splash out.
The N a n a d is at home
That is all my trouble.

Feelings against co-wife :

(1)

At the entrance of village Sima
Hang a bunch of mangoes

^a This implies lack of fidelity.

But the mangoes fell into the thorny bush.
 My co-wife snatched the love of my husband.
 And when she died
 My husband also died ;
 And nothing is left for me.

Joking relation with husband's younger brother :

(1)

D e o r took me to the C h h a t a festival
 And gave me conch bangles.
 We come back home
 And the jealous husband beat me.

(2)

Basketful of molasses and chapped rice,
 And cloth full of plums,
 The younger D e o r tempted me
 To go to the C h h a t a festival.

*Sentiment for the children of their own extended family against
 children of others :*

(1)

The girls of their house
 Entered the dancing ground.
 They danced in joy, and thought they were
 smelling flowers.

The girls of our house
 Entered the (same) dancing ground
 And left in a hurry smelling excreta.

(2)

The girls of their house are only dressed in rags,
 Earthworms come up wherever they sit.
 The girls of our house are dressed in bright s a r i,
 Wherever they sit they read books.

(3)

The girls of their house
 Bathe every day,
 Yet they look like vultures and kites.

The girls of our house
Bathe once in ten months,
Yet they shine like betel leaves.

Feelings against the prosperous Mahato caste :

(1)

The Mahato headman of Sangiradhih
Is wicked to the core.
His granary is full.
(Yet) he chews lotus leaves instead of betel.

(2)

The sheep of the Mahatos
Go from house to house.
The wives of the Mahatos too,
Go from house to house.

(3)

They get earthen pitchers from the potter
And iron ladle from the smith
The greedy wives of the Mahato-houses
Eat from full cups.

Sentiment for their own village Ketungadih as against a neighbouring villages :

(1)

The girls of Sangiradih,
Why do they move on the dykes !
The kite dived on them
And broke the arm of one.

(2)

The Karam basket of Sangiradih
Carries only balls of cowdung ;
The Karam basket of Ketungadih
Carries balls of clarified butter.

(3)

At the entrance to Ketungadih
Stands a banyan tree.

Juice drops from its branches.
The people of Bulandih
Were coming from the other side
And got stuck for six months.

(4)

At the entrance of Sangiradih
There are lots of thorny bushes,
One feels like leaving the place at once.
At the entrance of Ketungadih
Stands the mango groves.
It looks like the town of Purulia.

Sentiment for the Jawa-dali basket :

(1)

Rise up and sit,
Oh J a w a basket ;
We serve you with pure mind.

We did not eat hot rice
Nor did we eat stale rice ;
And not even roasted maize.

(2)

The K a r a m R a j a¹ is waiting for departure at
the door.
He is at the door, He is at the door to-day ;
To-morrow, Oh K a r a m R a j a, you will be gone
You will be gone across the Sankh river.

Conclusion

Our collection of songs, thus, seems to express the following social sentiments for the participatory girls :

A. Inter kin feelings :

1. A deep sentiment for the father's house which afforded them with an affectionate and protective environment. The bond of affection with the brother is particularly emphasized.
2. The protest against the custom of marriage with an

¹ K a r a m-R a j a is the presiding deity of the K a r a m basket.

old person for high bride-price and protest against husband's autocratic authority in the home.

3. Resentment against the authoritarian mother-in-law.
4. Resentment against husband's sister.
5. Jealousy of elder brother's wife for usurping the affection of the brother. (It should be noted that nothing is said against the younger brother's wife.)
6. Joking relationship with the husband's younger brother.
7. Ceremonial respect and avoidance of husband's elder brother.
8. Ceremonial respect for the husband's father whom she has to serve in various ways (carrying the hookah and so on).
9. Jealousy of the co-wife.
10. Sentiments in favour of the children of one's own joint family as against the children of the neighbouring families.

B. Inter caste feelings :

1. Jealousy of the prosperous Mahato caste. (It should be noted that of all the thirty different neighbouring castes, the Mahato is specifically selected.)

C. Territorial feelings :

1. Sentiment for their own village as against the neighbouring village.

It is interesting to note that the *expression of preferences and loyalties* against various categories of outgroups is the keynote of these songs, namely, those for the parents' family against those of the husband, for children of one's own extended family as against others, for members of one's own village as against those of others and for members of one's own caste as against those of others.

In these statements of preferences, it may be mentioned that while extended family, caste and village stand out clearly as focal points of social loyalties, other elements of social structure like clan and lineages of higher order (maximal or major) are left out of consideration. This may be partly because, beyond regulation of marriage through the principle of exogamy, the clan does not carry much immediate connotation of social action. In the day-to-day

ordering of social relationship clan affiliations do not offer any controversy. Further, relative to maximal or major lineages, the minor lineages or immediate patrilineal extended family relations play a much more important role in daily life. As a result, consciousness of affiliation is much more specific and intense towards the latter than towards the former.

Finally, we may repeat that this open expression of grievances and hostilities in poetic form through standardized, poised and melodic songs, often in front of the relatives and other people (castes and members of the neighbouring villages) adversely referred to, is likely to provide a healing effect on the tensions within the social structure.

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THE BĀNDANA FESTIVAL OF MIDNAPORE

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The Bandana Festival

THE Mahato, Kora and Lodha castes who inhabit the western part of the district of Midnapore, West Bengal, generally observe the Bandana festival in the month of Kartik (October-November) about the time when the Dewali or Festival of Lamps is also held.

The Bandana festival is almost exclusively meant for expressing the peasants' gratitude for cattle. Vermilion marks are put on the forehead of the animals; they are garlanded and incense burnt before them, while plenty of grass and rice are also offered to them.

The first day of the festival, known of J ā g ā n or 'Vigil', is observed by the villagers when they move all night from door to door, singing songs in accompaniment with the m ā d a l or drum. The second day is known as C h u m ā n or 'Kissing', when a cordial reception is offered to cattle, and sweetmeats prepared of rice-flour and coarse sugar are presented to them in a new winnowing fan. Sometimes, goats are also killed, and the meat is cooked along with rice and served to kinsmen and friends. In the morning of the second day, the hoofs of cattle are carefully cleaned and washed, and they are garlanded with flowers while their forehead is marked with the auspicious vermilion.

The third day, known as N ā c h a n ā or 'Dancing', is marked by music, dancing and festivity. A broad, open and high piece of ground is chosen in the village, and pegs are set at regular intervals on this spot. A number of strong bulls and bullocks belonging to the village are tied with stout ropes to the pegs, while the whole village gathers in order to see the fun. A number of strong young men begin to dance

between the rows of cattle, and try to infuriate the animals. One of them holds a cow or buffalo hide in his hand and thrusts it in front of the animals. The latter become enraged and try to gore the hide with their horns. This is accompanied by a kind of dancing by the youngmen, which continues until they feel exhausted.

Thus ends the Bandana festival.

Bandana Songs

The songs which are sung during these days express the simple joys and sorrows of a peasant's life. We are presenting here, in translation, a few samples of these songs gathered from the Mahato and Lodha castes of the villages of Jaralata, Khatgeria, Damdasol, Kadamdiha and Khakri in the Jhargram Subdivision of Midnapore.

(1)

Oh Brother ! How would you bring
 Your parents
 And your brothers ?
 How would you bring the Bandana
 Festival to every home ?

When Goddess Bhagavati will be worshipped,
 Oh Brother, I shall bring my parents
 On horseback ;
 Bring my brother on the back
 Of an elephant,
 And bring the Bandana festival
 By the music of drums,
 And Goddess Bhagavati will be
 Worshipped in every home.

(2)

Oh Brother ! Mother Lakshmi is awake (tonight),
 Mother Bhagavati is awake ;
 The Night of the new moon is awake
 And so is the full moon ;
 Our Mother, Oh Goddess !

Oh Brother ! A single blessing will
 Bring ten cattle and five sons,
 And abundant wealth ;
 And the second blessing will give us
 Ten brothers.
 It is through Thy grace, O Mother Goddess !
 That we are blessed with good luck
 And plenty of milk and rice,
 Which we enjoy best.

(3)

Oh, what strange flower
 Has woven thy cloth ?
 What flower does provide thee with food ?
 What flower adds beauty to the maiden's hair ?
 And what flower divine maintains creation ?
 Woven into cloth is the
 Blossom of the cotton tree ;
 The flowers of paddy give us food ;
 And sesamum and mustard make
 The maiden's hair beautiful,
 While marks of vermilion maintain
 The life of the world.¹

(4)

Without whose presence, Oh Friend, is the courtyard
 Of the house not like Vrindaban² ?
 Without whose presence, Oh Friend, beauty does not
 Come in sixteen-annas³ to the home ?
 Without whose presence, Oh Friend, is the parental
 home no home ?

¹ A woman whose husband is living puts on the auspicious vermilion mark, a widow has to ceremonially wipe it off. So marriage and wifehood 'maintain creation'.

² Vrindaban, the seat of the God Krishna, is used here for 'heaven'.

³ Sixteen-annas make a rupee, and so 'sixteen-annas' means 'in its fulness'.

Without whose presence, Oh Friend, doth the
whole world become dark ?

Without a Daughter, Oh Friend,
the courtyard is not like Vrindaban.

Without a Friend, beauty is not
sixteen-annas in a home.

Oh Friend, without the Mother, a parental
home is no longer home.

Without a Son, the world becomes dark.

(5)

Whose bullock goes round and round
in the field ?

Whose bullock turns the oil-press ?

Well, whose bullock while touching the
king's path,

Scatters dust from heaven to hades ?

The peasant's bullocks, in the fields do rotate ;

The Teli's⁴ bullock turns the press ;

The trader's bullock, while touching
the king's path,

Scatters dust from heaven to hades.

(6)

What colour is the buffalo's body ?

What colour are his two horns ?

What colour are his two ears ?

What colour are his two eyes ?

His body is black like the blackwasp,

Like gold, his two ears,

His horns are like the rain-clouds in colour,

Bright like the sun are the two eyes.

(7)

Who earns⁵ a family and many kin ?

Who earns wealth ?

⁴ Teli is the name of the caste which presses and sells oil.

⁵ i.e. 'is responsible for'.

Who earns sons and many children ?

Which son offers libation to the manes in (holy) Gaya⁶ ?

It is the buffalo which earns
a large family.⁷

The cow earns for us wealth ;

It is the father who earns sons and many children ;

It is the eldest son who offeres p i n d a in Gaya.

⁶ Gaya, the holy city, where Hindus from all India come to offer p i n d a or food the manes.

⁷ The farmer's buffalo is the source of his prosperity and therefore of a large family.

REGULATIONS OF THE KULTA CASTE OF ORISSA

by KULTA JATI MAHASABHA

Sambalpur

(Received on 18th December, 1956)

Introduction

AS we study the internal reformatory movements within various castes of Bengal¹, we observe that these mostly started round the year 1901, when Sir Herbert Risley in his celebrated *Census of India* discussed in detail the question of caste, and of the status occupied by various castes in relation to one another. The neighbouring parts of Bengal, like Orissa, seem to have remained more or less unaffected at that period. After Mahatma Gandhi initiated his Non-co-operation Movement in 1921, some of the suppressed castes seem to have become affected, for they also started on a career of internal reform; for the removal of untouchability with 'internal purification' was one of the main planks of the Gandhian movement.

The Kultas are an agricultural caste residing in Orissa, more numerous in the west than in the east. An interesting point about the former distribution of the caste is found from the gods whom they worship. The most celebrated temple of Siva as Ranesvara and Parbati as Ramachandi is situated near Khurda in Puri district. But no Kulta lives in this region now; although the temple is treated as the chief pilgrimage of the caste who now live mostly in the western portion of the State. Due to comparative local isolation, the Kultas have again become subdivided into smaller endogamous groups bearing separate qualifying names; and it has been, as we shall see in the following Regulations, the purpose of the leaders of the caste to remove these internal *b ā d ā s* or 'walls'.

¹ See, for instance, Nirmal Kumar Bose, *Hindu Samajer Gadan* ('Structure of Hindu Society' in Bengali), Visva Bharati, Calcutta, B. S. 1356, Chapter 12.

The caste organization of the Kultas, on a representative, democratic basis, i.e., along 'modern progressive' lines was first initiated in 1921. From 1921 to 1945, the caste held annual meetings of representatives, and passed resolutions in conformity with 'the progressive trend of the times'. These Regulations were eventually printed; and we are presenting the whole text in translation to the reader. It may be necessary to point out that the rules are still current, although the last edition was printed twelve years ago.

The Kultas occupy a fairly high rank in society. Water or food offered by them (except cooked rice) is acceptable to Brahmins and Kshatriyas. But some of their customs, like the acceptance of bride-price or permission to divorce, are not liked by men of higher castes.

The translation from the language of Orissa is by the Editor, while the notes are by the second signatory who is also responsible for bringing to light this very significant body of regulations.

Nirmal Kumar Bose
Nityananda Patnaik

The Text

(Our) Submission

The Kultas are a very numerous caste. They live in the district of Sambalpur, as well as in the neighbouring regions on all sides. They are present in large numbers in the Feudatory States of Orissa, in some portions of the districts of Cuttack and Ganjam, as well as the eastern portion of the Central Provinces adjacent to the district of Sambalpur.

The God Ranesvara and the Goddess Ramachandi form the tutelary deities of the Kulta caste. Shrines of the two are present in villages where the Kultas live in large numbers. It has been through the inspiration of the two that the caste association named R a n e s v a r a R a m a c h a n d i J a t i M a h a s a b h a, or Ranesvara Ramachandi Caste Great Association, has been founded. It held its first session in the holy centre of (the village of) Kamgan. The Mahasabha has

been established with the object of bringing about reforms consistent with the progressive trend of the times ; and this, through the promotion of friendship and solidarity within the caste.

As the existing internal condition of the caste was inadequately known, the initial task of the first session was to publish a number of regulations (for the guidance of its members). It was realized in subsequent sessions of the Mahasabha which were held from time to time, that there were various shortcomings in the rules. The latter were progressively amended or amplified, until finally, during the eleventh session held in Atabira in 1931, the Regulations were published in the form of a booklet. It is the object of the Mahasabha to bring about internal reforms, and at the same time educate people into a due recognition of the spirit of the times. It is an eternal law of nature that obstacles pursue every right undertaking. Who can say that there will not arise many obstacles in pursuance of the (Mahasabha's) object ? But we feel confident that with the progress of education, *s i k s h ā*, and culture, *s a b h y a t ā*, the caste will in course of time be able to surmount these obstacles.

The fourteenth session of the Mahasabha was held on the 29th and 30th of April, 1945, at Tilia, a village in the Sadar Sub-division of the district of Sambalpur. More than five thousand delegates from within the district and outside attended the meeting and successfully conducted the work of the session. In that session, it was unanimously decided to amend some of the regulations and the present body of revised and enlarged rules was duly adopted as a result. In order to promote internal discipline, as well as increase the usefulness of the Mahasabha, with its various branches and executive organizations, and in order to lighten the burden of work at the centre, it was decided to form a Managing Committee as well as a Judicial Council. If the Branch and Executive Associations, the Judicial Council and the Workers' Organization perform their respective duties in a selfless and devoted manner, then this great and numerous caste will be able to reach an ideal of perfection within a short space of time.

(Signatories)

Brajmohan Pradhan, Madhabchandra Gauntia, Manbhanjan Pradhan, Tirthabashi Pradhan, Kshirodchandra Pradhan, Purnachandra Pradhan, Yudhisthir Pradhan, Madhusudan Pradhan, Visvanath Gauntia, Vishnu Shankar Gadatia, Satyabadi Gauntia, Phakir Behera, Banamali Pradhan, Devendra Gauntia, Neelambar Pradhan, Ratnadhar Gauntia, Bepin Vihari Gauntia, Hrushikesh Gauntia, Gopinath Gadatia, Vidyadhara Pradhan, Dhananjaya Gadatia, Kamapal Gauntia, Trivikram Pradhan, Arjun Gadatia, Dhananjay Pradhan, Thakur Prasad Pradhan, Bhikhari Charan Sahu, Madan Bhoi, Purnachandra Pradhan, Divakar Gauntia, Dhanesvara Badhai, Rasbihari Gauntia, Yadumani Gauntia, Bhabagrahi Pradhan, Babaji Barik, Harachand Pradhan, Satyabadi Bhoi, Parasuram Pradhan, Sankarsan Bhoi Gauntia, Lingaraj Gauntia, Aniruddha Sahu, Bhishmadeva Bishala.

Regulations of The Ranesvara Ramachandi Jati Mahasabha

(Criticisms of a political nature are forbidden in the Mahasabha).²

CHAPTER I

Regulations for the Conduct of the Association

Article 1 :

It is the purpose of the Mahasabha to promote internal soli-

²These were the days when the British Government was in power, and any reformatory movement, even if social, was looked upon with suspicion by the authorities ; hence this caution.—Editor,

darity and to reform the Kulta caste in consonance with the spirit of the times.

Article 2 :

The Mahasabha is composed of brothers (i. e., members—N. K. B.) belonging to the Kulta caste living in Sambalpur and outside.

Article 3 :

The Regulations adopted in the last session of the Mahasabha will apply to the whole of the caste residing in various parts of the country. They will (all) be subject to these Regulations.

Article 4 :

For the conduct of the affairs of the caste and of the caste association in a regular manner, the office of the Mahasabha will be situated in some well-known centre within the territory inhabited by the caste.

Article 5 :

As all the associations belonging to the caste should be of a representative character, election to them shall be held after every three years.

(a) The *S ā k h ā S a b h ā* or Branch Association will be formed by representatives chosen by caste-brothers (i.e., members of the caste) of from 4 to 10 villages. The number of representatives in it shall be from 7 to 11. One President and one Secretary shall be elected from within this number.

(b) The *K ā r y a k ā r i n i S a b h ā* or Executive Association shall be formed of from 4 to 10 Branch Associations. The President of each Branch Association and another elected member of that Association will be members of the Executive Association. One President, one Secretary and one Treasurer will be elected from among the members of the Executive Association.

(c) The President of the Executive Association and one or more delegates from it will be elected as members of the *M a h ā s a b h ā* or Great Association.

Article 6 :

In order to attain the aims and objects of the Mahasabha, a Managing or Executive Committee will also be formed. In order to give effect to the object of the Mahasabha, a K a r m i S a n g h a or Workers' Association will be constituted under the leadership of a Chief Director. And within the above, there will be Directors, Organizers and Workers for different regions.

Article 7 :

The Managing Committee will be formed of the President of the Mahasabha, the Vice-President, Secretary, Chief Director and 4 more advisors.

Article 8 :

A Judicial Council will be constituted to adjudicate upon complaints brought before the Mahasabha. The President will choose from 7 to 10 members for this Council.

Article 9 :

The Managing Committee will have powers to frame regulations in conformity with the requirements of the Mahasabha.

Article 10 :

The members of the Managing Committee and the executive officers of the Workers' Association will have powers to inspect the Branch and the Executive Associations and submit written reports to the office of the Mahasabha, along with their comments. The office of the Mahasabha will, from among these...(lines missing in the original print.—N. K. B.)

Article 11 :

Each Branch Association will hold its session once every month. Each Executive Association will hold at least seven sessions every year. The Managing Committee will hold its session once every four months. The Mahasabha will hold its session at least once in a year.

Article 12 :

If less than half the members are in attendance, the work of the particular meeting will not be held to be valid.

Article 13 :

(a) If a member of the Branch or Executive Association absents himself from two consecutive meetings without being able to show satisfactory reasons, he will pay a fine of 8 annas.

(b) If a member is regularly absent, or if he is responsible for an act which is hostile to the Mahasabha itself, or to the progress of the caste, then his name will be removed from membership. The Managing Committee will have powers to set aside or retain the punishment meted out to members.

(c) A member whose punishment has been set aside in the above manner, will not hold an executive office for at least 3 years.

Article 14 :

(a) Every caste dispute or complaint should first be decided upon by a Branch Association ; and the decision shall bear the signatures of all members arriving at the decision.

(b) As a general rule, the petition will be submitted in that Branch Association within the jurisdiction of which the defendant resides, or within which the action has taken place. If the petition is submitted to an Executive Association, it will be forwarded to the Branch Association concerned. If it becomes necessary to decide upon the truth or otherwise of the facts of a case, it will be forwarded to the Branch Association at the centre of occurrence connected with the complaint.

Article 15 :

Every petition submitted to a Branch Association will bear a Salutation Fee of 8 annas ; to an Executive Association, of 1 rupee ; and to the Mahasabha, of 3 rupees.

Article 16 :

If any party is not satisfied with the decision of a Branch Association, then he can tender an appeal to the Executive Association.

If the deposition of the contestants or evidence of the witnesses is found to be imperfectly recorded in the judgement of the Branch Association, then the Executive Association may admit (fresh) depositions and evidences.

Article 17 :

(a) If any party be not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Association, he can tender a petition to the Mahasabha. The Mahasabha will not admit any further deposition or evidence, unless for very special reasons.

(b) If any party or witness has to be summoned before the Executive Association, then for serving notice to each person concerned, a fee of 4 annas has to be submitted. Then (only) the Executive Association will order the party or witness concerned to appear on an appointed date before the Branch Association concerned.

Article 18 :

An appeal against the decision of a Branch Association shall be made within 3 months of the judgement to an Executive Association. An appeal against the judgement of an Executive Association shall be made at the next session of the Mahasabha.

Article 19 :

If an application or appeal is preferred before any Branch or Executive Association, and if the Association fail to come to a decision within 3 months of the submission of such petition or appeal, then it shall be bound to submit due explanation to the next higher organization.

Article 20 :

Complaints or appeals described in Articles 14, 16 and 17 will be received in the office of the Branch Association, Executive Association and Mahasabha respectively. In the case of an appeal, copies of judgements or orders passed shall be submitted along with the application.

Article 21 :

If the parties or witnesses concerned in a particular complaint reside in localities under the jurisdiction of separate Executive Associations, and if their presence becomes necessary, then the Executive Association under whose jurisdiction each resides, will be bound to assist the Executive Association conducting a (particular) trial by serving notices, etc. The same

rule will apply to different Branch Associations functioning under one Executive Association.

Article 22 :

If an Executive or Branch Association pass a (particular) judgement or order, then other Executive or Branch Associations will help by agreeing to and giving effect to the judgement. Even if duly empowered, a Branch or Executive Association shall not take a decision contrary to the decision arrived at on the same issue by another Branch or Executive Association.

If petitions with regard to a particular issue are tendered to several bodies at the same time, then the body which is next higher in rank shall demarcate the jurisdiction of the lower bodies concerned.

Article 23 :

No Executive Association will have the right of realization from a caste-brother residing under the jurisdiction of another Executive Association. Each Executive Association shall carry on its function independently of one another. But it shall not do anything hostile to the Mahasabha, or contrary to the decisions arrived at by the latter. They will be bound to obey the orders of the Mahasabha.

Article 24 :

If any Executive Association, or Branch Association under it, does anything contrary to the rules accepted at the caste Mahasabha, or creates hindrances to the progress of the caste by not giving due effect to accepted rules, or in the opinion of the Mahasabha is guilty of a wrong act, the Managing Committee, after careful consultation with neighbouring Executive Associations under its jurisdiction, will have the power to dissolve such an Executive or Branch Association and reconstitute it when conditions are deemed favourable. The dissolution or reconstitution of an Executive or Branch Association shall be according to the orders of the Managing Committee.

Article 25 :

Caste-brothers will be bound to obey the Branch Association under whose jurisdiction they reside. A Branch Association

is authorized to mete out punishment for social abuses (literally, 'superstitions') for the purpose of their eradication.

The Branch Association shall be responsible to the Executive Association for the income and expenditure of funds realized from caste-brothers residing under its jurisdiction.

Article 26 :

All members of the caste residing under the jurisdiction of a particular Executive Association shall be subject to its rule. Fines realized with the object of suppressing social superstitions prevalent in the caste shall belong to the Executive Association concerned. The latter will have the authority of passing judgement on appeals brought up from the Branch Associations under its jurisdiction. The Executive Association is empowered to realize the stipulated subscription and other dues from caste-brothers residing under its jurisdiction. It shall spend money under the direction of the Managing Committee and be responsible to the latter for such expense.

Article 27 :

For the purpose of suppressing superstitious practices and in order to promote the progress of the caste, the Mahasabha will frame rules, and arrange for their compliance, in accordance with modern (concepts of) J ā t i D h a r m a, caste-duties ; Ā c h ā r a, usages ; N i s t h ā, faiths, ethics, values ; S i k s h ā, education ; S a b h y a t ā, manners or culture. It shall also make arrangements for the propagation of these rules among the entire Kulta caste. Caste funds shall be managed according to the direction and advice of the Managing Committee. The Mahasabha is the final authority in the regulation of social affairs. No appeal is admissible against the decision of the Mahasabha. But for very special reasons, and if half of the members of the Mahasabha agree, the latter might reconsider a decision.

Article 28 :

A list of members of the working committees of all Branch Associations under each Executive Association shall be maintained in the office of the latter ; and a list of Executive and

Branch Associations under each shall be maintained in the office of the Mahasabha.

Article 29 :

Each Executive Association will send to the office of the Mahasabha every 3 months, a statement of income and expenditure and a summary of transactions during that period. In the same manner, the Branch Association shall submit statements of income and expenditure and a summary of transactions concerned.

Article 30 :

The K a r m i S a n g h a or Workers' Association is empowered to inspect the work of the Executive and Branch Associations, to break the 'walls' within the caste (i.e., those which divide the caste into further sub-castes—N. K. B.), to help in the realization of funds from caste-brothers, and to inspect the accounts of each Association.

Besides these, there will also be appointed a number of agents of propaganda. The latter will go to villages where there are Executive or Branch Associations, and help in putting into practice the rules laid down, as well as in the realization of subscriptions. But no part of the money realized shall be in their custody. These agents will send, through the President of the Executive Association, their diary to the office of the Mahasabha. As a general rule, they will receive their salaries from the Executive Association.

One or more clerks will be present in the office of the Mahasabha in order to carry on the day-to-day business as well as to render assistance to the Secretary.

Article 31 :

The annual statement of income and expenditure and a report of transactions shall be published in the next session of the Mahasabha.

Article 32 :

Proposals for consideration of the Mahasabha should reach the office of the Mahasabha at least one month before the session ; otherwise, the demand that they must be included in (the agenda of) the session cannot be entertained.

CHAPTER 2

Regulations regarding Income and Expenditure

Article 33 :

The advancement of the Mahasabha is identical with the advancement of the entire caste. It is necessary to build up a Kulta Caste Fund so that various desirable measures can be taken up by the Mahasabha.

Article 34 :

As the funds accumulate, arrangements have to be made for the proper working of the associations of the caste and for the following measures : repair of dilapidated temples, proper daily worship in the shrines of Gods and Goddesses, establishment of orphanages for the caste, assistance to poor cultivators belonging to the caste, assistance in education of various kinds intended for the upliftment of the caste, grant of scholarships and other aids, improvement of agriculture and cow-protection, service of the poor and similar other social services which are in conformity with the spirit of the times.

Article 35 :

Sources of Income

(a) Annual subscription per oven (in which one family cooks its meals—N. K. B.), 2 annas.

(b) Casual contribution or donation.

(c) In each marriage, the bridegroom's party will pay 2 rupees, if rich ; 1 rupee, if it belongs to the middle-income group, and 8 annas, if poor.

The bride's party will pay half the above amounts.

(d) For permission given to a widow to remarry, or to a b a n d ā n i girl, the local people will take into consideration the means (of the party concerned) and fix a fee of from 4 to 15 rupees as customary dues to the caste.

Half of that sum will be retained by members of the caste residing in the village, while the other half shall be sent to the office of the Mahasabha (and debited) to the central fund.

A fee of 3, 2 or 1 rupee shall be realized as Salutation Fee

to Shri Ranesvara Ramachandi, and this is to be deposited in the fund with the Mahasabha.

Note. B a n d ā n i girl : in case of child marriage, the betrothal takes place in a ceremony as important as the marriage itself. After the first ceremony, and before the second, the girl is described by the above term.

The parents of a b a n d ā n i girl pay a fee to their caste-men as customary dues.

- (e) Fee for permission to divorce, 1 rupee.
- (f) Salutation Fee, when a punishment has been awarded.
- (g) Fee for submission of a petition.
- (h) Fee for obtaining copy of judgement, 4 annas per page of foolscap size.
- (i) Miscellaneous.

Article 36 :

No payment shall be made without obtaining a proper receipt (for it). If a bribe is offered or accepted, then both the parties will be punished.

Article 37 :

Printed receipt books shall be kept in the offices of the Branch and Executive Associations for payments made to the Mahasabha.

Receipts should be in triplicate, out of which, one shall be given to the representative of the village, one sent to the Executive Association, and one retained in the Branch Association in the (bound) receipt book.

Article 38 :

Each village under a Branch Association shall display for the information of every caste-brother an account of the subscriptions and other dues received during the year. A copy of the above statement shall also be maintained in the office of the Association. The Branch Association shall maintain an account of receipts of annual subscription from each village under its jurisdiction, and also such dues from other sources as are debitable to the (central) Caste Fund. A copy of this account shall be sent to the office of the Mahasabha.

Article 39 :

The signatures of all those who realize, deposit or receive payments shall be affixed to each relevant paper. .

Article 40 :

A Branch Association can retain up to 5 rupees in its office ; and if more accumulates, the excess should at once be despatched to the office of the Executive Association. The Executive Association can retain up to 10 rupees for its expenses ; any excess should immediately be despatched to the office of the Mahasabha.

A Branch or Executive Association should not retain an excess for more than 7 days, but be bound to despatch it to the next higher organization.

Article 41 :

Any fund deposited with the Mahasabha, the Executive or Branch Association will be spent according to the instruction or permission of the Managing Committee or of the President.

Article 42 :

The following books shall be maintained in the different offices : (1) Proceedings, (2) Notice Book, (3) Books of Account, (4) Inspection Report, (5) Correspondence, (5) Record of Cases, (7) List of Committees and their members.

Article 43 :

The President of the Branch Association shall send a quarterly statement to the office of the Executive Association. Similarly, every Executive Association shall send every three months a statement of accounts to the office of the Mahasabha. The Mahasabha shall submit a full statement of receipts and expenditures to the annual session for the information of all caste-brothers.

Article 44 :

If any person misappropriate money belonging to the Caste Fund, the matter shall be brought up before the Managing Committee. The Managing Committee will award due punishment (to the offender). If, in the opinion of the

Committee, it is necessary to impose some other punishment or penalty, then the President of the Mahasabha or some executive officer empowered by the (Maha)sabha shall take the case to an appropriate court (of law). The expenses of such litigation shall be met with from the Caste Fund in accordance with the instruction of the Mahasabha.

Article 45 :

If the name of any caste-brother is not present in the subscribers' list, then his petition or his case, if he is in difficulty, cannot be taken up by the Mahasabha or any Executive Association or any Branch Association.

Article 46 :

All income from items listed in Article 35 belongs to the Fund of Shri Ranesvara Ramachandi. If any person belonging to the caste misappropriate or conceal even one pie out of this Fund, he will be treated as an enemy of society, *samāja-drohi*.

CHAPTER 3

Timely Social Regulations

Article 47 :

(a) If any relative or other person, while visiting a new-born babe for the first time, makes a gift of an ornament, cloth or cash, then the gift shall be treated as a present to the child. No one should expect any return thereof.

Note. In many social ceremonies, a formal exchange of gifts is customary.³ The present gift is not to be treated in that manner.

(b) The custom of washing and wiping by cloth the feet of one who has returned from pilgrimage is abolished.

³ See, for instance, Nirmal Kumar Bose : *Nabin o Prachin* (in Bengali), B. S. 1356, p. 102, where an exchange of this kind is described in relation to the marriage ceremony of the Nulia fishermen of Orissa.

Note. This was the method of welcoming home someone who had just returned from pilgrimage.

Article 48 :

Every person belonging to the Kulta caste shall begin to read and write before 5 years of age.

Article 49 :

(1) The customs of C h u d ā p a k ā, D e k h u n i, P u r ā b h ā r a and P i n d h ā n i are abolished.

Note. C h u d ā p a k ā : articles of food which are sent as gift to the bride's home by bridegroom's parents during the negotiation for marriage.

D e k h u n i : Custom in which a party from the bridegroom's village goes to see the bride ceremonially before marriage.

P u r ā b h ā r a : Articles of food sent as gift to the bride's house by the bridegroom's parents ; this being sent after formal betrothal and before the (second) marriage ceremony.

P i n d h ā n i : Clothes which are presented by the bridegroom's party to the bride's mother and other related women of the same generation during marriage.

(2) The G u ā p h u d ā n i ceremony will be held as at present, only after the match has been finalized.

Note. G u ā p h u d ā n i : the meaning is not known.

(4) 4 pieces of cloth will be needed in a marriage ; one piece each to accompany the m ā g u n i bracelet, ring and l a g n ā, and one piece as s a l ā b i d h ā (for the brother-in-law).

Note. The day before marriage is known as m ā n g a n. On this day, bangles and a ring are sent by the groom to the bride through a priest. The astrologer fixes the auspicious moment or l a g n a of marriage ; accordingly he receives from the groom, the third piece of cloth as present ; while the future brother-in-law, s a l ā, receives the fourth piece of cloth.

(4) It is permissible to use an open palanquin (d o l i), a (covered) palanquin, horse or carriage in a marriage procession. The use of flowers, balloons, musketry or fireworks etc. is forbidden.

(5) S u b h a - b i b ā h a is abolished.

Note. The term literally means, 'the auspicious marriage' ; but here the reference is to love-marriage.

(6) There should be no expectation of a return of the (gifts known as) *M a u l ā b h ā r a*.

Note. *M a u l ā b h ā r a*: load of foodstuffs sent on a carrying pole or *b h ā r a* by the bridegroom's guardian to his mother's brother's house.

(7) The eating of *g h e e* or clarified butter used in the *h o m a* or oblation to fire, and the acceptance of money for giving away the bride are forbidden.

Note. The bride and bridegroom have jointly to offer an oblation of clarified butter to fire, which is their first act of performing a Vedic *y a j n a*, or fire-sacrifice, as a symbol of admission to a householder's life. Part of this *g h e e* was given to the two to eat, as a custom among the Kultas.

(8) In a marriage ceremony, the number of invitees should be between 10 and 50. If the rule is broken, the party will become punishable.

(9) The custom of *B h a r i - d e b ā* during marriage is abolished. The invitation should be sent by despatching betel-nuts, a letter or by sending some person.

Note. *B h a r i - d e b ā*: the meaning is not known. It is also customary to send a present of betel-nuts along with the invitation to the marriage ceremony.

(10) In the *B a n d ā p a n ā* or ceremony of 'paying obeisance' to the mother-in-law (when the bride expresses ceremonially her formal submission to the mother-in-law), a coco-nut shall be used (as an offering by the bride to the mother-in-law).

(11) Marriage with kin is wholly forbidden.

Note. Cross-cousin marriage was prevalent among the Kultas.

(12) The number of bearers who carry presents when the bride is sent to her husband's home is limited to a maximum of 20.

Note. For the sake of ostentation, a large number of men with loads of presents used to be sent formerly.

(13) The custom of *B h ā , t a - k h u ā n i* or 'feeding rice' to the new bride is abolished.

Note. On her first entry to her husband's home, the new bride is ceremonially given rice to eat for the first time. This involves heavy expenses, as a feast has also to be given to kinsfolk.

Article 50 :

(a) Members of the caste living in a village are responsible for the disposal of the dead body of another member. If they do not perform the requisite duties, then, if a complaint is lodged by the elder member of the dead person's family, they will become punishable.

(b) The custom of K h a n ā k u l ā is abolished.

Note. K h a n ā k u l ā : the meaning is not known.

(c) Any agnate directly related to the deceased cannot be ceremonially pure in a shorter period of time (than the prescribed number of days for mourning). But if he has some special auspicious ceremony to perform (within the period of 'impurity', i. e., mourning), he can personally go through the purificatory ceremony (i. e., reach the end of his mourning) by obtaining permission from the Association.

(d) On the ceremony of the Tenth Day, no one except those belonging to the family of the father-in-law of the person (performing the S r ā d d h a or ceremonial offering of food to the dead) will offer a present of cloth to him as part of the P ā n i - m i l ā ceremony. But, in order to lighten his expenses, they may present him with goods needed in the (S r ā d d h a) ceremony.

Note. P ā n i - m i l ā : 'water-acceptance', i.e., the ceremony when kinsfolk once more accept water from the hands of one who was hitherto 'unclean' on account of the death.

(e) On the eleventh day after death, the customary eating of fish will be substituted by the eating of g h e e or clarified butter.

Note. While in mourning, i.e., the period of ceremonial impurity, the mourners cannot take non-vegetarian food, but have to subsist on boiled sun-dried rice and certain vegetables alone. It is only after the performance of the S h r ā d d h a ceremony that they can renew their normal diet, when kinsfolk take food along with them, and they eat fish to mark the end of mourning.

Article 51 :

If a widow desirous of marriage has children, then the latter must be placed in charge of a suitable guardian before she can take another husband. She cannot marry unless her child

has attained the age of 5 (when the latter can be handed over to a guardian).

Article 52 :

The custom of H a r a j ā is abolished. If a wife refuses to go and live in her father-in-law's house (i.e., with her husband) without having obtained a writ of divorce, or without sufficient cause, then she will be punishable. And the guardian of the girl will also be punishable.

Note. H a r a j ā : the meaning is not known.

Article 53 :

If it is proved after due enquiry by the Association that the husband has been deprived of his legitimate rights on account of the fault (in character or habits) of the wife or of her guardian, then the Association can duly permit a husband, desirous of issues, to take another wife. And the husband, in that event, may also claim compensation from the (first) party.

Article 54 :

If a person take a second wife while the first one is living, then if the first wife is so desirous, he is bound to give her a writ of divorce. Otherwise, if the complaint is lodged before the Association, the latter can come to a similar settlement (of the issue).

Article 55 :

If a widow or a woman having a husband has sinful contact with a person belonging to the (Kulta) caste, then both will be expelled from caste. But if the Mahasabha so decide, they or their issues may be re-admitted to caste. In a contrary event, they and their issues will remain outcasted.

Article 56 :

In case of 'justifiable' contact with an untouchable (when there is physical contact in a conflict for instance ; contact as in illicit union is unjustifiable.—N. K. B.) only the person concerned will have to undergo ceremonial purification.

Article 57 :

(a) The custom of re-admittance to caste under a m a h u ḷ a (*Bassia latifolia*) tree is abolished.

Note. The ceremony of re-admittance of an outcaste is performed under a m a h u l a tree, when a barber shaves his head and then a brahmin priest performs the purificatory ceremony.

(b) In no social ceremony connected with s a n s k ā r a (i.e., birth, marriage, death, etc.) or p r a t i k ā r a (i.e., punishment) or p r ā y a s - c h i t t a (atonement) should an animal be sacrificed.

Article 58 :

If anyone drink wine or take other intoxicants in contravention of social regulations, then he will undergo heavy punishment.

Note. Prohibition was one of the main items of the Gandhian programme, and this seems to have inspired the Kulta caste in 1921, when they adopted measures of social reform.

Article 59 :

Unless otherwise absolutely incapable, every caste-brother must keep cattle and take care of them in the proper manner. No one shall sell old or useless cattle to anyone other than a peasant (i.e., not to a butcher, who is, in the case of cattle, generally a Muslim.—N. K. B.).

Note Cow-protection and the advancement of agriculture similarly occupied an important position in the Gandhian programme.

CHAPTER 4

Regulations about Social Punishment

Article 60 :

Whenever the term 'social punishment' is used, it refers to punishment awarded for an affront to the Mahasabha, for the increase of superstitious practices in society, for an affront to God Ranesvara or Goddess Ramachandi and for acts due to which the (fair name of the) caste is blackened.

Article 61 :

If one does not submit to the orders of the Sri Ranesvara

Ramachandi Jati Mahasabha, then on the first occasion, he will pay (the stipulated) fine, and on the second occasion, a fine which is twice (the former amount). If he has been marked by the sacred mark at the temple of Sri Ranesvara Ramachandi (as a sign of the expiation of his sins), and yet repeats his offence a third time, then he will be expelled from caste.

This right (of progressively enhancing punishment) will vest in the Executive Association through the permission of the Managing Committee.

Article 62 :

The right of enquiry into offences scheduled in the Articles under Chapter 3 will vest in the Branch Association. The Association will have the right of imposing a fine of 3 rupees or less by way of punishment. The Executive Association will have the right to impose a fine amounting to a maximum of 10 rupees, or of ejecting (an offender) from caste.

Article 63 :

If any Member, Delegate or President of a Branch or Executive Association or of the Mahasabha is found guilty of negligence or of having committed an offence scheduled in Chapter 3, then he will be liable to the same social punishment as any other person. The right (of awarding this punishment) will vest in the next superior organization (than that to which the offender belongs).

Article 64 :

If a Branch Association is guilty of an offence between two sessions of the Mahasabha, the Branch Association shall be reconstituted under the advice of the Executive Association by means of the votes of the caste-brothers. If the members of the working committee of an Executive Association or its (ordinary) members are guilty of any offence, then the Managing Committee will take suitable action against them.

Article 65 :

It is within the rights of every caste-brother to lodge a complaint before the Branch Association with regard to any superstitious practice in society. For the purpose, no Salutation Fee need be paid.

Article 66 :

If a person is sentenced for having committed a social offence, his grievances cannot be taken up for consideration unless permission is obtained from the Branch or Executive Association or the Managing Committee or the Mahasabha. The Association which finds a person guilty is also responsible for prescribing the remedial measures (i.e., the punishment). Only such members of the Association as have the surnames of 'Pradhan' or 'Bhoi' can perform the ceremony of re-admittance of an offender to caste. If the Pradhan or Bhoi are not duly permitted by the Association, they cannot, on their own account, admit the sentenced person to caste.

Article 67 :

If a person is found guilty of infringement of some social regulation, the Association will consider the merits of his case and award due punishment. If the Bhoi or Pradhan pardon his offence without necessary permission, they will themselves become punishable. If they (the Bhoi or Pradhan) repeat the offence on several occasions, they will be severely punished and remain outcasted until the Managing Committee or the Mahasabha passes judgement on their case.

Article 68 :

If the President or Secretary or Delegates or any other member of the caste conceals or misappropriates any article or even one single pice belonging to the caste Association, then he will become punishable for his offence against society.

Article 69 :

In no village should there be more than one group within the caste. If any faction is discovered in any village, then the real offender will be punishable. If the offence is established, then those who assisted the offender will also be punishable according to the rules of the caste. If caste-brothers residing in a village do not assist in breaking up the faction or fail to do so, then the Branch Association will take necessary steps for that purpose. If a person does not render assistance without being able to show proper cause, then he will also become punishable.

Note. This is with reference to the attempt to remove endogamous subdivisions within the caste itself.

Article 70 :

If a Branch Association feel helpless in meting out punishment to a guilty person, then it will forward all relevant papers to the Executive Association. The Executive Association will go through them and take necessary steps for punishing (the offender).

Article 71 :

The right of sentencing an offender by ejection from caste should only lie within the competence of the Mahasabha.

Article 72 :

If a person is guilty of some offence in terms of the caste Regulations, or has stained the reputation of the caste by an act (of moral turpitude—N. K. B.), then as long as the matter is not decided upon by the Association concerned, he will be kept outside social functions (i.e., he will not be permitted to join them). If members of his family do not exchange food and water with him (literally, 'do not have food- and drink-relations with him', i.e., if they cut off all connections with him) then they will not be subjected to ostracism.

Article 73 :

While adjudicating upon a particular issue, the Association (concerned) may direct the alleged offender to take an oath in the temple of Ranesvara Ramachandi ; and the (final) decision may be arrived at on the basis of the oath.

Article 74 :

A person who has been punished by outcasting will have to pay a Salutation Fee to Ranesvara Ramachandi in accordance with the gravity of his crime, and according to the direction of the Association. Or, if he performs atonement, he can be re-admitted to caste. But as long as he is not re-admitted, any person who enters into social ceremonial relations with him will also be punishable.

List of Sessions of the Mahasabha

Number	Place	Date
1	Kamgan	22, 23, April 1921
2	Kamgan	11, 12, April 1922
3	Kamgan	1 to 3 April 1923
4	Kapasira	23, 24 March 1924
5	Suryagadha	25, 26, 27 February 1925
6	Toshagan	26, 27 February 1926
7	Bijepur	12, 13 April 1927
8	Kumbhari	8, 9 April 1928
9	Lapanga	30, 31 March 1929
10	Mura	13, 14 March 1930
11	Atabira	5, 6 April 1931
12	Thebri	March 1933
13	Sohela	3, 4 June 1934
14	Tilia	29, 30 April 1945

Presidents

1. Sri Sankarshan Gadatia, Zemindar of Bijepur.
2. Sri Dayanidhi Gauntia of Toshagan.
3. Sri Sankarshan Gadatia, Zemindar of Bijepur.
4. Sri Dayanidhi Gauntia of Toshagan.
5. Sri Vidyadhara Gauntia of Saria.
6. Sri Vidyadhara Gauntia of Toshagan.
7. Sri Sankarshan Gadatia, Zemindar of Bijepur.
8. Sri Sadhab Gauntia of Karlajuri.
9. Sri Ratnakar Gauntia of Lapanga.
10. Sri Madhabchandra Gauntia of Ramphaluga.
11. Sri Sankarshan Gadatia, Zemindar of Bijepur.
12. Sri Parasuram Pradhan of Chakuli.
13. Sri Satyabadi Gauntia of Kudharenpali.
14. { Sri Brajamohan Pradhan, Pleader, Bargarh.
 { Sri Madhabchandra Gauntia of
 Ramphaluga as Vice-Chairman.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

CORRELATION OF THE GLACIAL AND INTERGLACIAL PERIODS WITH THE WET AND DRY PHASES OF CLIMATE

The problem of dating palaeolithic tools in peninsular India is intimately connected with the dating of certain fresh-water deposits which bear tools and the matrix of which, in some cases, has been lateritized.

The sequence established in several sites in Mayurbhanj has been as follows : A boulder bed lying about 3 ft. above a calcareous bed of clay has been found to contain pebble tools of crude workmanship. This is followed above by about 6 ft. of pebble bed with unconsolidated matrix, which has yielded crude bifaces, followed by bifaces of superior workmanship in Churgunia Ghati, and possibly also in Mukurmatia. The Kuliana beds, four miles away, have yielded crude and finished bifaces and choppers, but no pebble tool of the kind associated with the lowest bed in Churgunia.

So far, no fossils have been found with the tools. Heavy mineral analysis has also failed so far to draw any line between the subdivisions of the upper beds which have yielded tools. On typological grounds, Sen (1954) has suggested that the Kuliana deposits may be considered to be of Middle Pleistocene age.

In any case, search has continued in the bed carrying pebble tools for its actual lower limit. At one site on the Burhabalang, the underlying sticky clay has yielded tree-fossils (Bose 1952). Chaudhuri and Sarma have recently discovered teeth of *Sus* and *Boselephas* from about this zone ; and they are of opinion that this may be indicative of Pleistocene date (unpublished note). We do not however know the extent of the gap between this bed and the tool-bearing bed above. Investigation is still being carried on for establishing the exact relationship between the two.

In trying to establish a climatic correlation between the tool-bearing beds of the Peninsula and the Soan valley in the Punjab, Krishnaswami (1947) has used the sequence of terraces

in the Attirampakkam nullah near Madras as evidence of the succession of a wet and dry phase of climate. Sen has suggested that laterites and non-lateritized beds may indicate a succession of wet and dry phases (1954).

As far as we know at present, laterite is formed under certain lithological conditions, provided there is a heavy precipitation for a short period followed by a comparatively long dry season, during which water seeps into the soil, leaches out certain minerals and is then drawn up above to replace certain other minerals. Laterite needs for its formation, a particular *succession of wet and dry months*. Today, it can be observed under formation in places having a mean rainfall of 20 in. as well as 50 in. and above. When the mean annual rainfall is too low or too high (when the land is too dry or really not dry enough in any part of the year) laterite is not likely to be formed. So, the mere process of lateritization or its absence in a certain place may or may not be indicative of a succession of wet and dry phases of climate. It indicates change of condition ; *but whether from wet to dry or from more contrasty to an evenly spread out rainfall*, we do not know. This is why it is suggested that the correlation is yet premature.

Secondly, Chaudhuri and Sarma have observed that the Baripada beds show evidence of the advance and regression of the sea and of local uplift and depression within a range of about 50 ft. If this is correct, then this may also explain why the river at Baripada, and ten miles beyond, was able to carry pebbles and boulders at one time, and clay at another. The observed succession may be easily related to minor coastal oscillations instead of to widespread climate changes which affected the volume of the river's flow. A rise and fall of the sea-level may be opposite in different parts of the Indian coast-line, as it is to-day, due to tectonic irregularities. It may have nothing to do with an increase of oceanic waters (i. e., due to climatic fluctuation), unless so proved.

The attempt to correlate the alternating lithological character of the tool-bearing beds in Mayurbhanj with tool-bearing beds or terraces in extra-peninsular India is therefore yet premature. The river-terraces reconstructed by Krishnaswami

(1947), although very suggestive, have an unconvincing character about them, namely, that they are based on several distinct river valleys, and a composite reconstruction was made out of them. More detailed investigation in one single river bed is needed before the terrace sequence in Madras can become generally acceptable.

That is one direction in which work has to proceed. On the other hand, the exact junction of the lowermost tool-bearing bed and the underlying one carrying mammalian teeth has to be looked for, for purposes of more exact dating by fossils. Micro-fossils have also to be searched for in the tool-bearing beds in the hope that they might yield better evidence of the wetness or dryness of contemporary climate. When these become available, the task of correlation of extra-peninsular tool-bearing beds or terraces with similar beds in peninsular India would become possible. Perhaps this would also help us in correlating the tools of East and South Africa with those of India on surer geological grounds. The tools themselves should not be used, in the present state of our knowledge, as index fossils¹.

N. K. Bose

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¹Note submitted at a symposium in the Indian Science Congress, 1957, held jointly under the auspices of the Sections of Physics, Geology and Geography and Anthropology and Archaeology.

CASTE, OCCUPATION AND STATUS

The Indian Statistical Institute has recently (October, 1956) sponsored a scheme of encouraging village industries in the village of Amdabad in Midnapore (see first and second articles in the present number for particulars about Amdabad). Their object is to find out how far the income of a number of families can be raised by means of village industries, the products of which can be sold in the neighbourhood ; and through what amount of capital outlay. The work is being conducted with the help of a small band of local social workers, while the task of economic enquiry is under the direct responsibility of the Indian Statistical Institute.

There are 52 families of the Dule caste, with an approximate population of 500 in the village. Their traditional occupation is the carrying of palanquins. But as palanquins are now rapidly falling out of vogue, the Dules to-day have mostly become landless labourers or beggars.

The making of baskets or traps for catching fish, or winnowing fans etc. from bamboo, or waterproof coats of palm-leaf, is traditionally the occupation of the Dom caste, who are another of the untouchables of West Bengal. As Amdabad lies not far from the northern border of the Sundarbans, and as there is a dearth of skilled artisans in these new settlements of farmers, there is a high demand for good basketry of various kinds. At present, traders fetch bamboo-work from Birbandar bazaar, 9 miles to the south, or from Kalabaria, 14 miles west, and sell them in the villages near Amdabad. So it was thought proper to introduce the art among willing Dules, and thus help them to increase their earning. An instructor named Prasanna Dom was accordingly appointed in Takapur bazaar, and a number of Dule families at first showed great eagerness to learn. It was arranged that the manufactured articles should be sold through a newly organized co-operative organization. The articles which began to be made here were soon in great demand, as the work was more carefully done and the raw materials chosen with greater care. They cost higher than goods turned out by other workers, but the demand went on increasing. Soon the harvest season came along in

November, and the attendance at the Centre began to fall. The neighbours of the Dules complained that the Dule women and children had taken to begging, and they were easily earning about 8 to 10 pounds of rice every day, because every farmer had enough rice and to spare in his home. Moreover the raw materials had to be paid for in the Centre, while formerly bamboo twigs were more often stolen from a neighbour's clump, and manufactured articles therefore fetched more profit.

A printed poster was immediately widely circulated in the bazaars of the neighbouring villages saying that alms should not be given at all to people who could work ; and this seemed to bear due effect. Yet the attendance at the Centre did not materially improve. A more sympathetic and intimate enquiry was at once undertaken among the Dule families, and this soon revealed a more deep-seated resistance to the introduction of the bamboo industry than had been anticipated even by workers who were residents of the village, and with whom the Dules had been in intimate economic association for generations.

It transpired that a Dule named Taranga Behera had been outcasted for having taken to the occupation of the Doms. This had happened even before the Indian Statistical Institute came upon the scene. Taranga had not however given up his new, and more profitable, occupation, but had just defied his castemen. The complaint of the Dules against the Centre was that they were being placed under a Dom to learn the trade.

The General Elections are fast approaching ; and hundreds of small mats of wickerwork are now needed for pasting posters. Some unemployed Brahmin and Mahishya young men have started making these bamboo mats, and they fetch a fair price. Dule men and women are quite willing to take lessons from upper caste men, and make the mats, for the latter *do not fall under the category of articles traditionally turned out by Doms*. The present attempt of the workers connected with the Indian Statistical Institute is to bypass caste rules for the moment by encouraging the Dules to make the new articles and get used to their sale. It is hoped that once the habit becomes established, and upper caste people do not hesitate to manu-

facture basketry of traditional patterns, things which were exclusively associated with the Dom caste, the prospect of gain (and the example of high caste neighbours) might break down the association between caste, occupation and status among the Dules of Amdabad.

P. K. BHOWMICK

BINOY BHATTACHARYA

THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS CONTRACEPTION

Dr. S. N. Sanyal in his article on 'The Attitude towards Contraception' (*Man in India*, 36,267) has described the attitude in rather generalized terms. We now possess some concrete data on this attitude as a result of the two family planning experiments carried out jointly by WHO and the Ministry of Health, Government of India. The experiments were designed to test the rhythm method of birth control. Both of these have been abruptly abandoned and a report has been published. It would be worth-while to summarize their results here. They give an idea of the attitude towards contraception of two groups of distant peoples in this country.

Of the two experiments, one was carried out in Ramana-garam, Mysore, where the Rockefeller Foundation had established in 1936 a Health Training Centre. There were 14 experimental villages containing 1600 households which comprised 1301 couples. The wives were below 40 years of age. Attitude survey was possible in respect of 1088 couples. Of these 1088 couples, either of the partners of 811 couples (75%) were willing to learn a method of birth control, while the rest (277 couples) were unwilling. 103 (37%) women had no surviving children, while 127 (45%) with surviving children wanted to have more. Of these 127 women 23 had no male issues ; 5 women desired to follow their elders, while another 5 believed that children were the gift of God.

Out of 811 willing couples, the rhythm method was actually taught to 112 women and only 41 couples regularly followed it and 39 irregularly. 47 couples were unsuitable for this particular method of birth control. 90 couples reported insufficient data about their menstrual cycle. 313 couples did not report their menstrual data of which 269 were lactating.

74 couples were no longer available for further experiment. 97 were pregnant, 76 having conceived during the first six months of the enquiry. The educational level of these 811 couples was poor, only 155 men and 19 women were able to read.

The other experiment was conducted at Lodi Colony, New Delhi, where the educational standard is comparatively higher than at Ramanagaram. A sample survey of 265 couples showed the 262 husbands and 127 wives had passed the matriculation examination or been at college. 100 wives had primary education. It transpired that 443 couples (34%) were aware of some form of birth control and the largest number 180 (41%) were using condom, 50 (11%) coitus interruptus, 18 (4%) the diaphragm, while 75 (17%) had used the rhythm method.

Of the 1274 couples included in this survey, 898 were willing couples while 476 were unwilling. Of these 376 couples, the motives of 369 could be ascertained. 191 couples desired more children ; 65 were satisfied with the method they were already using ; 18 couples were sterilized* ; 33 couples were satisfied with the present birth interval between pregnancies (this birth interval has been found to be $3\frac{1}{2}$ years at Ramanagaram in women using no birth control) ; 23 couples believed that they were unable to conceive because of their age or illness, while 22 did not believe in birth control.

Of the 898 willing couples, 558 reported their menstrual details and rhythm advice was given to 254 only. Out of these 254 couples the rhythm method was followed by 27 only. The remaining couples adopted some other measure or a combination of measures. 174 couples reported pregnancy while 186 reported neither pregnancy nor menstruation.

It will be apparent from the above data that in both the areas, the really interested people appeared to be few in number ; 41 out of a gross number of 1301 couples in Ramanagaram and 27 out of 1274 at Lodi Colony, a percentage of 3 and 2 respectively, having actually taken active part in the two experiments.

S. S. SARKAR

* Cf. 'Contraception and Civilization', *Man in India*, 36, 1956, pp. 86-87,

BOOK REVIEWS

Culture in Crisis : a Study of the Hopi Indians. WITH A FOREWORD BY JOHN COLLIER AND A CHAPTER FROM THE WRITINGS OF BENJAMIN LEE WHORE, *by Laura Thompson.* Harper and Brothers, Publishers, New York. 1950.

The project which resulted in the publication of the above volume was jointly sponsored by the United States Office of Indian Affairs and the University of Chicago's Committee on Human Development. It represents one of the most important efforts at co-ordinated inter-disciplinary research in the social sciences.

Field-work was planned 'to investigate the personalities of a representative sample of children, aged 6 through 18, in the context of the social system in each of the selected communities. Life histories and emotional, mental and physical development of the selected children were to be studied by means of participant observation, interviews, medical examination and a battery of relatively "culture-free" psychological tests of the projective, guided interview and performance types' (pp. 4-5).

The volume begins with an effort at making clear statements of the theoretical and operational frameworks that guided the study. The problem of assessing the standard of *life* of a people is viewed as being multi-dimensional, involving ecological, somatic, sociological, psychological and symbolic factors. A culture crisis is conceived 'as the manifestation of critical imbalance in one or more of the essential dimensions of a culture structure in environmental setting' (p. 16).

One of the dominant operational postulates of the book is the emphasis on 'structural insight', that is, 'insight into precision of relationship or proportion of configuration, irrespective of dimensions, magnitude and quality' (p. 17).

Traditional Hopi culture has been viewed as being highly integrated, not only in the 'organic' or 'functional' sense, but also on a 'logical' or 'aesthetic' plane, making an optimum adjustment to the ecological setting. The analysis of the 'crisis' reveals disturbances on the ecological and somatic plane for the tribe as a whole, while, it has reached 'acute proportions in its sociologic, psychologic

and symbolic dimensions only in certain Mennonite dominated communities where the traditional ceremonial and social system has broken down under White pressure (p. 179). Finally the 'core' of the crisis is viewed as 'ideological'.

The above analysis is followed by a few suggestions for 'improvement'. Some of these are of a general nature such as that 'every change adopted by the tribe must pass two tests : (1) it must have survival value in the arid environment ; and (2) it must be reconciled or rationalized in terms of Hopi traditional values and world view' (p. 187). It is also recommended that 'the Hopi must continue to grow in their uniquely Hopi way or lose their integrity as individuals and as a group' (p. 187).

Thus far we have only presented in summary some of the highlights of the book. The reviewer is deeply impressed by the humanism of the social scientists involved in the above series of research projects and also by the careful balance maintained between quantification and descriptive insight. One however feels that, like many other fellow American anthropologists, Laura Thompson views Hopi culture with a degree of sentimentality which tends to obscure the objective setting of the Hopi as a tiny powerless enclave surrounded by the powerfully industrialized, numerically dominant White Americans. One of the obvious perspectives of the contemporary Hopi culture is that whatever remnants of traditional values still exist among them, these are being maintained in an economic and power vacuum ; the economic and political power structure of the Hopi being largely dependent on those of the Whites. Under such circumstances, there is reason to suspect that the values of the Hopi people are being inevitably pulled in the direction of those presented to them at a higher economic and power level. The reviewer feels that instead of conceiving an immortal vitality of the traditional value system of the Hopi, one may surmise that an essential requisite condition for maintaining the integrity of the Hopi 'soul' is to raise the economic and power level from one of deficit to one of parity with the surrounding culture. While the above objective should be attained by travelling the most tender path possible, we should also remind ourselves that anything short of this objective is likely to distort the quality of life of the deficit group. Whether the core pattern of the traditional value system of the Hopi, deeply attuned to a primitive productive system

and a relatively simple social organization, can at all cope with the contemporary objective task remains to be seen. The anthropologist might discover to his surprise that while the people survive without large-scale mental disorganization anticipated by him, copying or evolving emergent values adjusted to current objective of psycho-biological survival, the core of the traditional value system may die after failing to fulfil objective tasks.

SURAJIT SINHA

Sociology, by Emory S. Bogardus. Fourth Edition. Pp. 616. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1954.

The volume was first published in 1934. Through a succession of later editions, those of 1941, 1947 and 1954 (the one under review) respectively, Dr. Bogardus has attempted to make his text book of sociology for the undergraduate students up-to-date in theory, methods and bibliography. He orients his presentation with 'the social group' as the focus, while viewing the latter in 'ecological, cultural and psycho-social' perspectives. Within the above framework, the author presents the various chapters systematically, each beginning with a series of more or less lucid definitions, occasionally illustrated with a few examples and ending in a detailed enumeration of 'problems' and the presentation of a fairly extensive bibliography. We may also mention in addition a section on methods of 'group research' (pp. 543-73), and the presentation of a select bibliography of 'a sociological reference library' comprising seventy-five volumes (pp. 593-96). All these together should make the book useful to a beginner in sociology.

The reviewer, however, feels constrained as well as provoked with regard to some aspects of the book. Firstly, the volume does not give even a sketchy perspective of the growth of thought in the field of sociology. This is also reflected in the selected bibliography, where one does not find the names of such master thinkers in the field of social sciences as Marx, Weber, Durkheim or Mannheim. The number of definitions appears to be disproportionately large and not often of adequate significance. Finally, while the author maintains an underlying assumption that sociology aims at universals applicable to societies not limited by time or space, he seems to be deeply steeped, as a normal citizen, in his national values while making some of his definitions: 'A subversive

group that plans to overthrow a democratic government is *antisocial*' (p. 11) (*italics mine*).

Such ethnocentrism, however, cannot be regarded as an unqualified evil, provided a parochial entry to the field of understanding social interactions be considered merely as a convenient point of departure towards understanding the more universal.

SURAJIT SINHA

Ethnography of Ancient India, by Robert Shafer. Pp. viii + 176. Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden. 1954. Price not mentioned.

The main purpose of the author seems to be to give an ethnic classification of the inhabitants of ancient India, based chiefly on the references to states and peoples found in the Indian epic Mahābhārata. Supplementary material gleaned from Sanskrit literature in general has also been utilized by him with advantage, to strengthen his conclusions.

The epic and the Purāṇic lists of tribes have attracted the attention of scholars for a long time and these have been considered to throw important light on the political geography of ancient India. To claim however that these have an ethnic basis is a bold venture in the realm of scholarship, which would require the claimant to proceed with utmost caution. The modern science of race is not known to have been cultivated in ancient India or for that matter in any of the civilized countries of the ancient world. The authors of the Indian epics and Purāṇas never bothered about finding an ethnic basis for their enumeration of tribes, castes and countries. What descriptive account we find in their works may possibly contain stray hints regarding certain racial characteristics of the above. But it is extremely difficult to get a complete picture on the strength of such meagre evidence. Thus, in spite of the brilliant efforts of the late Ramaprasad Chanda, ancient Indian literature remains so far, more or less, a barren field for students of anthropology.

Under these circumstances, our author has perhaps no other alternative than to start with certain assumptions. The first and foremost of these is stated very clearly : 'The Great Epic of India is essentially the story of native rebellion against Aryan exploitationThe Aryans knew so little about governing that they enslaved or degraded the masses and exploited the persons of wealth and

position to the point where native economy was disrupted and the Great Rebellion of the Mahābhārata broke out. In missing this point scholars have misunderstood the whole background of the war of the Mahābhārata' (pp. 1-2). A natural corollary is the next assumption that the Pāṇḍavas were the Aryan party and the Kauravas were their non-Aryan opponents. The Pāṇḍava practice of polyandry, which could have been urged as a point against this notion, is explained away somewhat airily in a footnote to page 30, which contains an unfair dig at anthropologists. The Great Epic describes the Pāṇḍavas rather inconveniently as relatives of the Kauravas, on which the author remarks, '.....as earlier students of the Epic have pointed out, when one has funds, he can always find someone to trace a good pedigree for him' (p. 3, note 3). But why should kinship with the 'non-Aryan' Kauravas be regarded as good pedigree and a matter of pride by the 'Aryan' conquerors? The author is inclined to regard the word *Vaṛṇa* or colour as suggestive of the racial composition of the various divisions of society. He bestows great importance on the traditional colour-scheme which describes the Brāhmaṇa as 'white', the Kshatriya as 'red', the Vaiśya as 'yellow' and the Śūdra as 'black'. This leads him to the inference that the Brāhmaṇas were primarily (though not entirely) Aryan, the Vaiśyas were Tibeto-Burman and the Śūdras were Bhil. Whether the designation 'Aryan' in this context indicates a racial group is unfortunately left unexplained. But had this conventional colour-grouping any clear-cut racial basis? To accept the 'yellow' Vaiśyas as Tibeto-Burman and the Nishādas as Bhil under all circumstances, would in our opinion be an unscientific over-simplification of history, even if it be admitted that the *Vaṛṇa* system might originally have referred in a vague way to physical distinctions of different groups of people. Discussing the racial composition of the early inhabitants of northern India in the west, the author rejects the view that the Dravidians occupied northern India before the Aryans came. The supporting argument seems to be that the Dravidian-speaking Brahuis of Baluchistan are physically dissimilar to other groups at present speaking the Dravidian tongue. The Dravidians however were originally the speakers of a common language like the Aryans and the possibility is never ruled out that they might have included among themselves various

racial elements physically differing from one another. On page 10, the author says, '...the Yādavas distinguished the Nisādas from the Goṇḍas and Kols' and refers to the *Harivaṃśa*, Chapter 5, which is said to have stated that 'from Niṣīda originated the Niṣādas, Tuṣāras, Tumbaras, Goṇḍas, Kols and other tribes living in the Vindhyas' (note 2). This is however not correct. The 20th verse of the 105th Chapter of the first section of the *Harivaṃśa* runs as follows :

*ye chānye vindhyānilayāstushārāstumbarāstathā
adharmaruchayo ye cha viddhi tān venasambhavān.*

One can easily see that the original passage does not mention the Gonds or the Kols. Nilakantha, commenting on the passage, says *tushārāstumbarāścha prāntadeśi yā h m lech ch haviśeshā h ; Vindhyānilayā h 'Goṇḍa' iti 'Kola' iti cha prasiddhā h m adhyadesi yā h*. It is hardly a scholarly practice to ascribe to a text the utterance of a commentator who is removed from the former at least by a few centuries, without mentioning it. The author seems to think that the western branch of the traditional Mānava race (descendants of Manu's son Śaryāti) occupying Ānarta represents the people who created the Indus civilization and he identifies this branch of the Mānavas with the Iranians. Now Ānarta stands for the territory round Dwārakā and has nothing to do with Sind, Baluchistan or the Punjab. Besides, one of the arguments of the author is that a sculptured head with a short beard has been discovered at Mohenjodaro and 'chin-whiskers' are the characteristics of many Persians in their sculptures. It is really difficult to understand how a single sculpture can be regarded as proof of the racial affinity of an entire population. On pp. 19-20, the Yādavas are described as having originated from a mixture of the Mānava-Iranians and the Bhils and there is a definite hint that Krishna the Yādava hero of the Epic had a Bhil strain in him. On page 30 (note 1), Krishna is again called a foreigner or semi-foreigner. An individual with Bhil blood predominant in his veins, can hardly be given that designation. Or, is the author suggesting an Iranian origin for Krishna? Relying on the verbal similarity of the linguistic names 'Kur' 'Kur-ku' and 'Korwa' which belong to modern Mundic tongues

and the ancient tribal names 'Kuru' 'Kaurava', the author concludes that the Kurus were a Mundic people. The tradition current among the various branches of the 'Kauras' that they were descendants of the Kauravas who had taken refuge in the hill country of Central India, emphasized long ago by Dalton, is brought in as an argument in support of this contention. Apart from the fact that no importance can be attached to superficial sound-resemblances, it must be borne in mind that localized traditions like the above, can sometimes be very late, even early modern. In the case of a primitive tribe this may indicate a process of Hinduization and it would be extremely risky in the absence of weightier evidence to build up serious conclusions on it. The author distinguishes between the Dāsas and the Dasyus mentioned in Vedic literature and thinks that the Dāsas and Āryas were on a social level above the Dasyus, identified by him with the Bhils. In this connection, he has associated the Harappa civilization with the Vedic Dāsas and the epic Āraṭṭas. Either this is a contradiction because he has identified the Mohenjodaro people with the Iranians; or we are to understand him as saying that Mohenjodaro and Harappa had different ethnic compositions. We are not told whether it is his intention to claim the Dāsas and the Āraṭṭas as Iranians. In his chapter on 'The Aryans and their Migration to India', the author has criticized the generally accepted view that the Aryan invasion of India was 'a nice orderly west-to-east spread'. He has sought to locate the original home of the Aryans within the 'Meru-lake Mānasa-Sarovara region'. According to his reconstruction, they were pushed out by some powerful people and entered India, some going north-west and thence to Iran, some remaining in north-west India, other branches spreading out in the Indus and the Ganges-Jumna valleys pushing the earlier ones farther south. He has drawn our attention to the Vendidad list of 'countries' (Fargard 1) and has compared them with their Vedic counterparts, pointing out that four 'countries' of the Avestic list agree with Indian river-names going geographically from the east to the west. The famous river-hymn of the R̥gveda, also as he says, follows the order, (a fact discussed fully by Dr. Raj Bali Pandey in his paper 'The Historical Interpretation of the Nadi-Stuti Hymn in the R̥gveda', *Proceedings of the Twelfth Session of the Indian History*

Congress, 1949, pp. 92-96). This is the central point in his argument which proceeds mostly on philological lines. He has shown much ingenuity here, but it would require much more solid evidence to make it convincing and acceptable. Generally speaking, caution is needed in three directions. (1) It should be remembered that the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *R̥gveda* containing the river hymn is admittedly a late composition. (2) We should stop to think whether makers of the *Vendidad* list of 'countries' and the *R̥gvedic* list of rivers followed any systematic order at all. It is possible, even probable, they did not. (3) We should pay more attention to archaeological data. Did the Aryans in course of their migration from Tibet leave any archaeological trail behind them? Or is it, that traces of these disappeared only in India while surviving in the middle eastern countries?

If we have criticized the author's methods and theories in a somewhat detailed manner, it is certainly not to disparage his sincere effort. One is impressed as one goes through the pages by the amount of his labour and learning. These have been amply displayed in the very thorough appendices which the book includes on the *Mahābhārata* lists of states and tribes. In the section entitled 'Geography' the author's aim has been to indicate the exact location of the states and tribes. The 'Digvijaya' lists seek to give the ethnic designation of the people. These are followed by eighteen other lists, major and minor, drawn up for the same purpose. Though there would always be scope for vital difference of opinion regarding the author's attempts at ethnic classification, the excellently prepared lists would still retain their usefulness for students of Indian history. The author has consulted extensive manuscript material as well as the printed text of the *Mahābhārata* and he has laid before us a complete picture of the political geography of India in the age of the Great Epic. Perhaps he had not wanted to stop here. But his success, though partial and limited, is of great value as students of epic geography would derive immense benefit from these sections of his work. The lists have been carefully collected, thoroughly scanned and classified, critically edited with necessary notes and comments. A note on the corresponding Greek names and a copious index to the appendices besides the general index have added to their usefulness. These sections together undoubtedly constitute the most valuable part of the author's work, for which his readers would remain grateful.

The two maps given in the book are models of perfect printing. The general get-up is satisfactory.

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